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— અમદાવાદ —

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MILESTONES IN GUJARATI LITERATURE

BY

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PREFACE.

There being no such book in English, the idea of writing a sketch of the history of Gujarati Literature was first suggested to me by my colleague, Mr. A. K. Donald, a gentleman who takes great interest in vernacular literature. My original idea was to include both periods, classical and modern, in one volume, but as I proceeded with the work, the subject grew upon me, and in spite of trying my best to condense the materials, I was unable to carry out my original plan, and have had to leave the modern period over for another volume.

The book is written at intervals snatched from a busy official life, and owing to lack of leisure many shortcomings have crept into it: of this I am fully conscious.

The MSS. were submitted to my friend, Mr. Narsinhrao Bholânâth Divatiâ, B.A., a gentleman of acknowledged authority on Gujarati Language and Literature, and to my eldest brother, Motilâl, whose study and knowledge of our literature is remarkably deep and accurate, and they have made many valuable suggestions and corrections. Similarly the Rev. Mr. Johnson, B. A., of the Irish Presbyterian Mission at Broach, and Mr. A. K. Donald, have rendered me great assistance by suggesting suitable alterations in the language and arrangement of the work. Mr. Donald has besides kindly contributed a foreword. To all of them I am deeply grateful.

With a view to secure a wider public than the inhabitants of Gujarat and Kathiawad, I have thought it fit to print the

vernacular text in Bálbodh characters instead of Gujarati, Bálbodh being read over the whole of India.

The picture of Kavi Dayârâm has been furnished by Mr. Manilâl Ichchârâm Desâi, B. A. I am obliged to him for the loan.

Bombay, {
September 1914. }

KRISHNALAL M. JHAVERI.

FOREWORD.

It was not until European scholars made the attempt that the story of Sanskrit literature was written. Weber, Max Müller, Macdonell and others have explored the treasures of Sanskrit literature, but the vernacular literatures have not attracted such attention. Indian scholars have told the story of Bengali literature, but hitherto Gujarati literature has received little attention, certainly in English there is only the most meagre information available. Every European anxious to understand the people among whom he lives and works, wants to know the nature of their popular literature, and I believe that the present work will be of material aid to such persons. It will also find many readers among educated Gujaratis who till now have not had the advantage of such a history. It covers five and a half centuries, and is brought down to the period when Gujarati writers were about to draw upon the stores of western learning and thought, first made available early last century. In reading this history one sees that Gujarati literature is a pale reprint of Sanskrit literature, though only a portion of that great storehouse of learning has been used. It is mainly the great epics and the Purans that have been resorted to. Some forms of literature well represented in Sanskrit, which one would have expected to have been popular, have been ignored, the drama for example.

It is singular, considering that Mahomedans exercised rule in Gujarat, that Arabian and Persian sources are so little in evidence. It is also strange that, though Gujarati was the vernacular of many Mahomedans, we do not find a single Mahomedan Gujarati writer in this long period. Parsis seem to have contributed very little, though the work of one Parsi is described. There is one surprise for the Europeans which is that women have composed songs that hold a secure position in the literature of the country.

Gujarati upto the period when this book closes has practically no prose. Even didactic and philosophic works were written in verse. This must have had a cramping effect on authorship, but in this Gujaratis were following the example set by the Sanskrit masters, who even wrote their legal treatises, their grammars and mathematica handbooks, in verse.

The present work is incomplete, but it is to be hoped that the reception accorded to the story of Gujarati literature down to the beginning of the nineteenth century will encourage the author to continue the work down to the present time. A vernacular spoken by ten millions must have a literature, and it is the duty of educated Gujaratis to improve the language, and enrich the literature, because it is only by means of instruction through the vernacular that these ten millions of people and their progeny can be brought to a higher level of education and wellbeing. Those

Gujaratis who have access to modern learning through English, should endeavour to place before their less fortunate brethren these treasures in Gujarati dress, but this is only one part of their task. Gujarati authors must give voice to the ideals of the Gujarati people, where they are low, they must try and raise them. They must use the novel, the drama and the satire to unmask the self seeker and parasite. They must place before the Gujaratis, models of noble characters, so that the young may be constrained to strive to lead the noble life. In this way only, can Gujarati authors earn the lasting gratitude of their countrymen.

A. K. DONALD.

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MILESTONES IN GUJARATI LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The Gujarati language is the mother-tongue of ten millions of people in Western India. It comes in rank after Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali and Marathi. It is used not only by Hindus, but by Parsis and Mahomedans alike, and has furnished for centuries a vehicle of thought and expression to these three communities, varying in religion but united in language.

Geographically Gujarat is separated from Kathiawad, though linguistically it might be taken as if Gujarat and Kathiawad were one, excepting for the provincialism which is bound to exist in areas, widely differing from each other, in the origin and character of their inhabitants.

Gujarat is the land of Gurjars. Vincent Smith considers them to have been "foreign immigrants, closely associated with, and possibly allied in blood to, the White Huns. They founded a considerable kingdom in Rajputana, the capital of which was Bhinmal or Śrimal, about fifty miles to the north-west of Mount Abu. The minor Gurjar kingdom of Broach (Bharoch) was an off-shoot of this

Historical Sketch.

kingdom which conquered Kanauj at the beginning of the ninth century.”* Roughly this kingdom was called Gurjarat or Northern Gujarat and Rajputana, and the Southern portion of the same territory was called Lāt† or Southern Gujarat.‡ Kathiawad, the home of the Scythians or Kāthis, was originally known as Saurāshtra§ or Ânarṭa आनर्त. The earliest European record is that of the conquest of this province by Menander about 155–3 B. C. The Edicts of Asoka (240 B. C.), and of the Śaka Satrap Rudra Daman (150 A. D.), cut on the rock at Girnar, and the construction of the Sudarśana Lake, by Tushaspha, the Persian Viceroy of Asoka’s grandson, Chandragupta, have given Kathiawad an important place in the Ancient History of India. The Śakas, a nomadic Central Asian tribe living somewhere north of the Upper Jaxartes, migrated to India about the middle of the second century B. C., and, traversing via Taxila and Mathura, the province of Sind, “carved out for themselves a dominion in the Peninsula of Saurāshtra or Kathiawad, and some of the neighbouring districts on the mainland.” The practices of these foreigners were distasteful to the natives of India, and the

* Early History of India, 2nd Edition, p. 303.

† “Lāt is said to be the name of a country lying to the west of the Narmadā. It probably included Broach, Baroda and Ahmedabad, and Khaira also according to some.”—V. S. Apte.

‡ Shastri Vrajlal thinks that Broach was the capital of the Lāt Kingdom.

§ At present Saurāshtra is the official name of one of the four divisions of the Political Agency of the province.

Ândhra Kings seem to have conquered the Śakas, but the province of Kathiawad again became detached, and, along with Sind, Cutch and other Western provinces, passed under the sway of Rudra Daman, a Śaka Satrap (circa 145 A. D.). The reign of this tribe lasted till about 390 A. D. when Chandragupta II, Vikramāditya, finally overthrew the dynasty. Then the Kings of Kanauj, who belonged to the Gurjar stock of Rajputs, ruled Kathiawad, the control over which implied also control over Gujarat and Malwa. They lost these somewhere about 914 A. D. In Gujarat the Solankis (Chalukyas)* founded an independent kingdom, with their capital at Anhilwad (961 A. D.) Mulraj being the founder. The first faint traces of the invasion of India by the followers of Islam became visible about this time, and the sack of Somnath by Mahmud of Ghazni brought the peninsula into prominent historical relief.

Eastern Kathiawad boasted of the famous Vallabhi dynasty, which was founded by Bhattârka towards the close of the fifth century. Their reign lasted till 770 A. D., when the Arab invaders from Sind overthrew them. Chinese travellers have described the glories of Vallabhipura,† which ranked in learning with the famous University of Nalanda in Bihar. It was a wealthy city, a centre for the study of Buddhist philosophy. Anhilwad Patan rose on the ruins of Vallabhipura, and it retained its place

* These Chalukyas held a considerable kingdom in the Deccan with their capital at Kallian. Their kingdom flourished for nearly four to five centuries, with reverses of fortune.

† Modern Valâ.

as the chief city of Western India till Ahmedabad came into prominence in the fifteenth century under Mahomedan rule. The Chavdas, Chalukyas and Waghelas represented the last traces of native Hindu rule over Gujarat. Alauddin Khilji* dealt the first direct blow to this rule, and then Mahomedan supremacy prevailed till the Marathas in the eighteenth century overran the province and founded a kingdom at Baroda. How the present British Government took the province from the Marathas is matter of recent history.

The limits of modern Gujarat, i. e., that part of the country in which Gujarati is the current language of the inhabitants, may roughly be taken as follows:—

Geographical Boundaries. It is bounded on the north by the river Banas, which rises near Udaipur and is lost in the Ran (desert) of Cutch; on the south by the Damian or Damanganga river, which flows into the sea near Daman; on the east by the province of Malwa, and the Western Ghats or Sahyadri range; and on the west by the Gulf of Cutch and the Arabian Sea or Indian Ocean.*

* Kavi Narmadâśankar has described the boundaries thus:—

उत्तरमां अम्बामात,
 पूरवमां काळीमात;
 छे दक्षिण दिशमां करन्त रक्षा कुन्तेश्वर महादेव,
 ने सोमनाथ ने द्वारकेश ए, पश्चिम केरा देव.

In the north Ambâ Mâtâ, in the east Kâlî Mâtâ, in the south Kunteśwar and in the west Somnath and Dwarka.

There are two principal dialects of modern Gujarati, viz., Cutchi and Marwadi. Cutchi is the spoken language of the people of Cutch, they have got no other written language save Gujarati, which is used for all sorts of written communications, and for the keeping of accounts.

The Marwadis are scattered over a very large part of Gujarat, and they speak a peculiar dialect which is an admixture of Brijhasha with Gujarati, and written in characters which are nothing else than a modification of Gujarati characters, with the vowel marks either omitted or displaced.*

Those who speak this language belong to the three great religions of India,—Hindu, Mahomedan and Zoroastrian. Banias, Jains, Lohanas, Bhatias, Rajputs, Kolis and Bhils, Memons, Boras, Khojas and Musalmans, along with Parsis, have helped to carry the use of the Gujarati language beyond the borders of India. Natives of Gujarat are to be met with in Burma, Ceylon, South and East Africa, Siam, Manilla, Hong-Kong, Shanghai and Kobe, and recently in London and Paris, and though scattered over such a wide area, they are using their mother tongue for purposes

* For instance the Marwadis and even little educated Gujaratis would write कक अज मर गय छ, which would read when the vowel marks are supplied काका अजमेर गया छे (Uncle has gone to Ajmer), or काका अजे मरी गया छे (Uncle has died to-day). Written Persian also partakes of this peculiarity.

of trade and commerce. Indeed, in Burma and Zanzibar and Lamu and Mombassa, even the judicial courts have had to recognise the existence of this language by the appointment of Gujarati interpreters, and South Africa now maintains a weekly journal published in Gujarati and English.

The language is easy and does not present many obstacles to the student. As a conversational language, it is concise, simple, and well adapted for social and domestic intercourse. Though not very copious, it is flowing and forceful. "To express abstruse metaphysical and scientific disquisitions, it has to borrow largely from Sanskrit. Its simplicity consists in the following particulars. The conjugations of its verbs are few, and less complex than those of English, Sanskrit and Arabic; and it is not overloaded with auxiliaries, articles, prepositions and adverbs. The letters are few and without any combinations except the diacritical or vowel marks. Some of the letters, particularly, *व छ झ ठ ढ ण त थ द भ* together with the nasal and guttural sounds are somewhat difficult for the foreigner to pronounce with accuracy."* This characteristic it shares in common with all those vernaculars of India which are derived from Sanskrit, for instance, Bengali, Hindi and Marathi.

* For the above I am obliged to the preface in Mirza Mahomed Cauzim's Dictionary (1846).

Gujarati characters are borrowed from Sanskrit, or rather are Sanskrit themselves with a slight modification, the most outstanding being that the top line of each letter is done away with in Gujarati. The table given below will show at a glance the original and the modified alphabet.

VOWELS

Sanskrit	Gujarati	Sanskrit	Gujarati
अ	અ	ऊ	ઊ
आ	આ	ए	એ
इ	ઇ	ऐ	ઐ
ई	ઈ	ओ	ઔ
उ	ઉ	औ	ઔ

CONSONANTS.

Sanskrit	Gujarati	Sanskrit	Gujarati
क	ક	ङ	ડ
ख	ખ	ढ	ढ
ग	ગ	ण	ણ
घ	ઘ	त	ત
ङ	ઙ	थ	થ
च	ચ	द	દ
छ	છ	ध	ધ
ज	જ	न	ન
झ	ઝ	प	પ
ञ	ઞ	फ	ફ
ट	ટ	ब	બ
ठ	ઠ	भ	ભ

Sanskrit	Gujarati	Sanskrit	Gujarati
म	મ	श	શ
य	ય	ष	ષ
र	ર	स	સ
ल	લ	ह	હ
व	વ	ळ	ળ*

The mode of writing these symbols is phonetic, i. e., every sound is represented by a symbol.†

The mode of writing these characters has passed through two intermediate stages after parting company with Sanskrit.

Mode of Writing.

* There is no ળ (ळ) in Sanskrit excepting in the Vedas, but only ल (ल). ળ appears in Gujarati where ल occurs in Sanskrit generally, e. g., कमल in Gujarati but कमल in Sanskrit.

† This is a fit place to notice the great difficulty experienced by foreigners in correctly pronouncing certain words of the Gujarati language. There are no marks to distinguish a short sound from a long one, when one and the same word pronounced short or long means two different things: e. g., गोल pronounced *gol* (the o being long as in *old*) means 'round in shape,' while pronounced short as *Gaul*, it means "treacles." Similarly, though many words are pronounced with an aspirant they may have no provision made in them for writing it: e. g., मार is pronounced *mhârâ* मार (mine) though the "h" is not written. There are also great defects in the mode of the spelling of words, for which there are no uniform rules existing. This question is closely connected with that of the correct pronunciation of words, and is engaging the close attention of Gujarati scholars. Much discussion has taken place but no definite conclusions have yet been arrived at. A Committee was appointed by the Sâhitya Parishad, and it has submitted a report (April 1912) in which an effort is made to lay down some guiding principles in respect of this subject.

The first is the *Bālābodh* or *Devanāgarī* mode, where the Sanskrit mode itself was reproduced with the top-line for each letter kept untouched; and then to obviate the trouble of drawing a small head-line for each symbol after writing its body, a whole or entire line, covering the length of the slate, tablet or paper was drawn beforehand and the symbols written underneath (like the Modi form of writing Marathi); the latest or most recent mode is to write bald characters without a top line.

Devanāgarī हुं घेर जाउं छुं

Modified हुं घेर जाउं छुं

Modern हुं घेर जाउं छुं

The correct mode of writing the language is to separate each word from the other by means of a slight distance, but this is generally done only by the learned class. Merchants and other less learned people do not observe this rule. Nor have they yet left off entirely the second mode of writing, i.e., drawing a line overhead. In fact, children are taught to write in that fashion yet, as it serves to guide their hand and keep it straight. In business correspondence and account books this mode is still current.

The origin of the language is traced to Sanskrit, i. e., later or Purānic Sanskrit, as distinguished from the language of the Vedas, which is called Mahā Sanskrit. "With

Origin of the
Language.

the rise of Magadha and the advent of Gautama Buddha, who preferred to preach to nations in the spoken tongue, the Pali language was recognised as the spoken

tongue of Northern India" (circa 500 B. C.). "In the centuries following the Christian Era, the Pali became gradually replaced by the Prakrits, the spoken dialects of the people. The heroines of Kalidas speak Prakrit, and while Dushyanta makes love in Sanskrit, the beauteous Śakuntalâ responds to his love in the softer Prakrit. Vararuchi, one of the "nine gems" of Vikramaditya's court, is the earliest grammarian who recognises the Prakrits in his Grammar, and he distinguishes four distinct dialects of the Prakrit,* viz., *Mahârâshṭrî*, *Śaurasenî*, *Paiśāchî* and *Māgadhî*. We may fix the date of this literary recognition of the Prakrit dialects at 500 A. D. The different Prakrits have been modified into the different spoken dialects of modern India."† Some say, Gujarati comes through Śaurasenî which was prevalent near Mathura, from where it passed on to the West, i. e., to the shores of the Indus and thence to Marwad and Gujarat, and is thus related to Punjabi, Sindhi and Marwadi; others think that it is closely related to the Mahârâshṭrî group. Anyhow, one thing is certain that in its earliest form, where it begins to resemble the present dialect, it is met with in what

* Prof. A. MacDonell says in his History of Sanskrit Literature, "Between the beginning of our era and about 1000 A. D., mediæval Prakrit, which is still synthetic in character is divided into four chief dialects. In the West we find *apa-bhransa* (decadent) in the valleys of the Indus, and *Caurseni* in the Doab, with Mathura as its centre. Subdivisions of the latter were *Gaurjari* (Gujerati), *Avanti*, *Western Rajputani* and *Maharâshtri* (Eastern Rajputani)."

† R. C. Dutt's Literature of Bengal.

is called अपभ्रंश.* Though it is not noticed by Vararuchi, we find it noticed by Chand, who in his book "Prakrit Lakshana" mentions certain rules about it. Dr. Hoernle, who has edited this book, says that Magadhi was spoken in Behar, Bengal, Orissa and the North-East of Central India. In the North-West, in Western India and in some parts of Southern India, Sâmanya Prakrit (Mahârâshtrî) was current. The Apabhramśa was spoken in those parts of Northern India which are situated to the east of the Indus, but from certain inscriptions and forms of words found on the Girnar and in earlier Gujarati writers, it is possible to conceive also that Mahârâshtrî and Śaurasenî were also prevalent there at one time. The Apabhramśa form of the language has been specially recognised in his Grammar by Hemachandrâchârya, the most literary of Jain Âchâryas, who flourished in the reign of Siddharaj, but he has not told us whether it was current in his time in Gujarat or not, nor has he stated where it was in use, but it is conjectured from the copious illustrations given by him of Apabhramśa that it must have been a spoken tongue in his time. This Grammar was composed in 1168 Samvat year (1112 A. D.), and, therefore, there is very good reason to believe that even before then it was in general use.

Without going into minute details, it would not be improper to adopt the conclusion of Mr. K. H. Dhruva,

* Apabhramśa literally means deterioration or corruption, and hence a language which is a form of Sanskrit deteriorated or corrupted.

a most eminent philological scholar of Gujarat, that the history of the language could be divided into three periods:

1. From the tenth or eleventh century A. D., to the fourteenth. This might be called the Apabhramśa or old Gujarati period.
2. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century: this might be called the middle Gujarati period.
3. From the seventeenth century onwards, modern or new Gujarati period.

Thus it might safely be said that what Mr. Dutt calls "literary recognition" was accorded to old Gujarati or Apabhramśa in about the tenth century, and so far as this part of India was concerned, it was the last modification of Prakrit.

The following words are देशी or देश्य, i. e., they are not derived from Sanskrit, but were already prevalent in the country, when it came in contact with Sanskrit. A long list of these words is given by Hemachandra in his work called देशीनाममाळा. **देकुण** (a bug) the Prakrit equivalent being **मक्कुण** (Sanskrit **मत्कुण**) Gujarati, **माकण** or **माकड**; **बोलवुं** (to speak) is from **बोल**. **रोवुं**, **झांखरुं** **दाथरी**, **खोळीउं**, **खाबहुं**, **होवहुं**, **वाचको** are pure देश्य words. The following words have come direct from Sanskrit without the intermediation of Prakrit:—

विजोग from **वियोग**

धीरज from **धैर्य**

करम from **कर्म**

A majority of words have come through the intermediate Prakrit, e. g.,

Gujarati	Prakrit	Sanskrit
હૃદૈં	हृिअअं (इं)	हृदयम्
સુહો	सुअहो	शुकः
વેલો	गहिअ(लो) } गहेलो	गृहीतः
આપ	अप्पा	आत्मा
ગઝં	गोहृमो	गोधूमः
મેહું	मइलं	मलिनम्

A number of words are used in their pure Sanskrit form: भय, पूर्व, पश्चिम.

The modern tendency is to use words in their pure Sanskrit form, ignoring the intermediate stages. A writer would now discard the form अरथ and use its Sanskrit original अर्थ, so राज्य and not राज.

There is an admixture of Portuguese words like મોસંબી sweet lemon, French words like પલટણ a regiment, and also Marathi, Persian and Arabic words in the language, the result of the province having passed under the political control of some of these nations, or having come in close contact with those who spoke that particular language at different times. Many English words have now found a permanent home in Gujarati.

Before giving some illustrations of the literature of the Apabhramśa, it would be just as well to see how Gujarat stood in history and what sort of literature was in existence

Early state of Literature in Gujarat.

there before the rise of this vernacular literature, so that we might know what it inherited from the older culture. The Rajputs ruled over Gujarat between A. D. 746 and 1298, and various Sanskrit works were written during that period both by the Brahmins and the Jains.* But about the tenth century Apabhramśa began to come into use and several *Rāsās* in praise of Rajput Kings were written in it by Bhâts and Châraṇs. Their language was a mixture of Marwadi, Vraj and other vernaculars, and the birth of Gujarati was thus heralded by these court-poets in a language spoken by the people in contrast to the learned language, Sanskrit, which was exclusively used by the Brahmins and Jain Âchâryas. Pali and Magadhi respectively were used as learned languages by Bauddh and Jain religious writers. The use of Prakrit was considered vulgar by Brahmins, and this exclusiveness was overcome after a very long time, and that too owing to political reasons. Even then, Vraj and Hindi reigned supreme amongst the Prakrits, and, as pointed out above, it was not until the tenth century that Apabhramśa or primitive

* It would surprise the present generation of Parsis to learn that they too have contributed to the literature of Gujarat in its early form, and that their religious books were translated from Pehalvi into Sanskrit and thence into Gujarati. The "Arda Viraf Nama" was translated from Pehalvi into Sanskrit, and thence into Gujarati, and a manuscript copy of this work was made in Samvat year 1507 (A. D. 1451), by Behram Lakhamidhar (mark the resemblance of the latter name to a Hindu one). The "Minoi Khirad" was treated similarly in about 1613 Samvat year (1556 A. D.).

Gujarati could take a place among these more cultured tongues.

Even in the Musalman period that followed the Rajput domination, say from A. D. 1298 to 1420, when the Mahomedans conquered Anhilwad, Cambay, Somnath, Gondal, Junagadh, Idar and ultimately laid the foundation of Ahmedabad (1412 A. D.); the languages most in use were Sanskrit and Prakrit. The literature was almost entirely religious, and with the exception of only one non-Jain author it was wholly kept alive by Jain Sadhus. The Brahmins and other classes were entirely silent. The sun of their glory had set with the fall of the Rajputs. The reason given by Mr. G. M. Tripathi as to why these Sadhus alone were able to keep burning the torch of literature, while there was darkness all round, is this: with the fall of Anhilwad and the consequent uncertainty of the security of person and property due to the advent of the Mahomedans, Brahmins, Banias and other well-to-do classes, who alone could be thought in any way interested in letters, were taken up with the anxiety of finding out places of security and settling in them. They entered, therefore, on an era of wandering, and scattered themselves over all parts of Northern India as far as Benares and Mathura. This state of mind was not in the least calculated to foster a spirit of reading, writing, or studying. On the other hand, the Jain Sadhus had got the protecting arm of their *Gachchhas* (गच्छ) over them, and were thus able to live quietly and

peacefully and carry on undisturbed their studies in religion and literature. They were further able to preserve the purity of their language, because, being ascetics, they were more or less removed from contact with those who were following worldly avocations: while Brahmins, Banias and others daily came in contact with their Mahomedan rulers on the one hand, and Bhils, Kolis and other aborigines on the other, with the result that the purity of their language was affected. Owing to such a combination of circumstances, the influence of Sanskrit and other learned languages and literature began to wane, and the birth of a new language, a mixture of Deśī (the language spoken by the masses), Prakrit, Hindi and cognate tongues, and its development, arrest our attention. The seeds of early Gujarati literature were sown in the beginning of the fifteenth century. Southern India was as yet free from the inroads of the iconoclastic followers of Islam, and was able to pursue peacefully its great religious campaign, which culminated in the advent of such renowned Âchâryas, as Madhvâchârya and Râmânujâchârya, the great refuters of Śankarâchârya's philosophy (about the twelfth century). The echoes of their preachings and teachings penetrated into Gujarat too about this time, and influenced its people.

There is a number of Jain books, which can be counted by millions, which are still unpublished, lying untouched or uninspected in the several *Bhandârs*, scattered all over the country. The *Bhandârs* of Patan,

Extensive unpublished
Jain Literature.

Cambay, Jesalmere and the libraries of several Apâsarâs (Jain temples), as well as the collections of private individuals contain them. They thus remained concealed during the insecure days of Mahomedan rule, and the feeling that these books being sacred should not be exposed to public view is still held by many. The variety of this concealed literature and its wide extent can be gauged by a reference to a very useful book called the Jain Cranthâvalî (a list of Jain books), published by the Jain Śwetâmbar Conference of Bombay (1910 A. D.). The Jains were a great force in the time of Vanraj, who was brought up by a Jain Sadhu Śilagunasûri, and during the reign of Kumarpal they far outstripped the Brahmins, and attained to the zenith of their power. It was at this time that they wrote most, and produced the *Pânini* of Gujarati literature, Hemachandrâchârya. But the Brahmins regained their position, and beat them back, and were able to create such a prejudice against them that they have left a saying to this effect, that if you are pursued by a mad elephant, though a Jain temple be near, it is better to be killed than take protection therein: हस्तिना ताड्यमानोऽपि न विशेज् जिनमन्दिरम्.



CHAPTER II.

EARLY JAIN LITERATURE AND FORM OF LANGUAGE.

Rāsās are a peculiar poetical form of composition affected by Jain Sadhus, with the object of instructing the people in religion and morals, and hence, they were written in a tongue which they (the masses) could understand. A useful list of about three to four hundred Rāsās is published by a Jain author, Mansukhlal Kiratchand Mehta. They range in date from fourteen hundred Vikrama Samvat (even earlier)* to eighteen hundred and onwards [A. D. 1344 to A. D. 1744]. They incidentally throw a great light on the history of Gujarat, political, literary and social. The earliest of such Rāsās are *क्षेमप्रकाश* written about (Vikrama Samvat) 1410 by Jayânandsûri and *भरतबाहुबळीरास* by Guṇaratnasûri,

* A Rāsâ called *सप्तश्लोकास* composed in Samvat year 1327, and another work, called *उपदेशमाळ* by Ratnasinhāsûri are instances in point. The following couplet from the *उपदेशमाळ* shows the state of the language, then—i. e., about Samvat year 1347, when it is said to have been composed:

विजय नरिंद जिणिंद, वीरहृथी हिवय लेविणुं,
धम्मदास गणिनामि गमि, नयरिहिं विहरइ पुणुं.

A King called Vijaya was initiated (into Sadhuship) by Virjendra, and he was thereafter named Dharmadās Gani. Sri Jain Svetambar Conference Herald, January-February, 1913. p. 33.

हंसराज वछराज and श्रीळराज in Samvat year 1411 by Vijaya-bhadra, गौतमस्वामी or रासा by Udayavant Vijayabhadrasūri in 1412, and मदनरेखा (मयणरेहा) in 1413 by Harsevak.

The following instances of poetry written in Apabhramśa which are generally referred to by those who are interested in this branch of literature, are taken from the Essay on Gujarati language written by the late Śāstri Vrajlal Kalidas, a pioneer in this department.

काती करवत कापतां, वहिलड आवइ । छह ।

नारी बिध्या टलवलइ, जाजीवह ता । दह ॥

Those who are wounded by a knife or saw, die soon; but the bodies of those who [whose hearts] are pierced by women writhe as long as they live.

आगि दावा पालवइ । छया वाधइ वृक्ष ।

नारि हुताशनि जालिया छार उडउधिया लक्ष ॥

Trees burnt by fire sprout leaves again, trees which are cut down grow again, but (millions of) men scorched by women are blown about like ashes.

अश्वेतरसु बुद्धडी रावणतणइ कपालि ।

एकू बुद्धि न सांपडी लंका भंजण कालि ॥

Ravan was endowed with very great intellect (7800 kinds of intelligence) but even one was of no use to him at the time when Lanka fell.

These are extracts from Munjrājprabandh, written by Merutūṅg Āchārya, in A. D. 1305. The Gautamrāsā written

in Samvat year 1412 (A. D. 1356) contains two छंदs called *वस्तु (वस्तु) छंद and भाषाछंद. The former, Mr. Man-sukhlal Ravjibhai, another scholar of Jain literature, suspects to have been written by some one before the fourteenth century and inserted in the poem. It reads thus:—

वस्तु छंद—इण अनुक्रमे इण अनुक्रमे नाणसंपन्न,
 पन्नरहसय परवरिय हरिय दिय दुजिणनाह वन्दे;
 जाणवि जगगुरु वयण तिह नाण अपाण निन्दे,
 चरम जिणेसर इम भणे, गोमय म करिस खेऊ;
 छेह जई आपण सही, होछं तुला बेडं.

This is another extract from the same work written in the

भाषा छंद—जिम सुरतरवर सोहे शाखा,
 जिम उत्तम सुख मधुरी भाषा;
 जिम वनकेतकी महमहे ए,
 जिम भूमिपति भुयबळ चमके;
 जिम जिनमन्दिर घंटा रणके,
 तिम गोयम लब्धे गहगहे ए.†

At the end the author writes

चउदहसय बारोत्तर वरसें,
 गोयम गणहर केवळ दिवसें;

* वस्तु (वस्तु) means a summary or substance. It describes by way of a preface what the reader is to expect in that particular part of the composition. This summary is given in Prakrit, while the Chhand or real composition is written in the Gujarati of the period.

† रायचन्द्र जैन काव्यमाळा, गुच्छक पहेलो, पात्रुं २८.

किञ्च कवित उपगार करो,
 आदिहि मंगल एह पभणिजे;
 परव महोच्छव पहिलो लीजे,
 ऋद्धि वृद्धि कल्याण करो. *

In the following Samvat year i. e., 1413 Harmuni (or Har sevak) wrote his मयणरेहा:

* To those who are interested in this Rāsā, the following longer extract is sure to give delight. It is a beautiful picture of scenes of nature, and well depicted.

जिम सहकारे कोयल टहुके,
 जिम कुसुम वने परिमल महके,
 जिम चंदन सुगंधनिधि,
 जिम गंगाजल लहरे लहेके,
 जिम कयणाचल तेजे झलके,
 तिम गोयम सौभाग्यनिधि,
 जिम मानसरोवर निवसे हंसा,
 जिम सुरवरसिरिं कयणे वतंसा,
 जिम महुयर राजीपदनी,
 जिम रयणायर रयणें विलसे,
 जिम अंबर तारागण विकसे,
 तिम गोयम गुण केलिवनी,
 पुनिमनिशि जिम ससियर सोहे,
 सुरतरु महिमा जिम जग मोहे,
 पुरव दिसि जिम सहसकरु,
 पंचायण जिम गिरिवर राजे,
 नरवर धर जिम मयगल गाजे,
 तिम जिनशासन मुनिपवर.

ગામ કુકડીયે કર્યો ચોમાસો,
 સંવત્ ચૌદા તેરોમાંયો;
 કથા કારણ આ રાસજ કીધો,
 હરસેવક ચિત્ત લાયો;
 સાંધાં રે તમે મુલ સાંમળજ્યો
 ચરિત મયળ રેહારો;
 તિળ ઉપરી કાંઈ અધિકા ઝહો,
 મિચ્છા દુક્કડ મારો.

In 1450 (A. D. 1394) a book called *Mugdhâvabodh Mauktik* was written in Gujarati by a Jain to explain the rules of Sanskrit grammar. The language is not exactly Apabhramśa but at the same time it is not the modern Gujarati: જેહ તડ હું તડ થડ થકડ इत्यादि बोलि वईजेहे वस्तु नई परित्याग सूचीई अपादान. In the same year Śrī Somasundarajī wrote a *Rāsā* called *Ārāadhanā Rāsā*.

About Samvat year 1455 (A. D. 1399) Śrī Muni Sundar Sūri wrote a *Rāsā* called “*Śānta Rāsā*,” both in prose and poetry. In the next century Jain Sadhus translated many *Sutras* into Gujarati. A specimen of prose written in Samvat year 1529 (A. D. 1463) is taken from the Introduction to the *Nārma Kośa*.

પાટલીપુર નગર તિહાં નંદનડ શત્રુ ચંદ્રગુપ્ત રાજા તેહનડ પ્રધાન ચાળિક્ય પ્રતિવિન્ધયકડ રાજ્ય ભોગવઈ; પરં મંડારિ દ્રવ્ય નહિ તેહમણી, દેવતા આરાધી પાસા પામી સ્વર્ગચાલ ભરી જુવટઈ ચઈડ; જે કે, મમ્મનઈ જીપઈ તે થાલ સોનૈઈએ મરિજં ઢિઝ બનઈ તુમ્હેતુ એક દીનાર દિઝ, એમ દેવતાદત્ત પાસે કરી જીવવા

કાગડ કિંવા હંરફકોઈ દેવતાદત્ત ગાસે હું તે જીપઈ પણ માનવજન્મ હારવિહ
દોહિલડ પામઈ.*

Instances of prose and poetry written during this Nature of works period can be multiplied from sources written during this some of which have now been revealed period. through the studies of Gujarati Jains, who have taken a leading part in unearthing their old manuscripts, but, beyond emphasizing the fact that there was a goodly amount of (old) Gujarati literature in existence, not in a crude form, or a form which marks the early struggles of a rising literature, but in a form which could be taken to be an advanced—if not a finished—one for the circumstances then obtaining, they would not be of great use to us for our present purposes. Religious topics, popular tales, biography, rituals, medicine and other useful subjects were intelligently treated by the writers, and the common popular belief till now obtaining, that with Narsinh Mehta (A. D. 1415-1481) began the

* Śastri Vrajlal Kalidas gives some instances of earlier prose written somewhere between 1400 and 1481 A. D. from books treating of (1) Rituals (2) Medicine and (3) Jewels, from which only short extracts are selected, as there is no very outstanding line of cleavage between them and the more recent extract given above.

લછુ બાલક દંત વિના મરઈ ।તહનું સૂતક દિન ૧ । ।શોર કર્મ્મ કરીડું હુઈ
।તહનું સૂતક દિન ૨ ॥ ૨ ॥ કરંજ મૂલ ગાઈ તળઈ મૂઝનું પીજઈ હરસ જાઈ । છાસ સુડું
પાકડું બીહું પીજઈ હરસ જાઈ ॥ ૩ ॥ મોતિનું પહિલડ આગર સિંધલદ્રિપ જાણિવડ
બિજઈ આગર આરબ ।દશ જાણિવડ । ત્રીજઈ આગર પારસીક ।દશ જાણિવડ । ચઢઘડ
આગર બાવર (સં૦ બર્બર) ।દશ જાણિવડ ।

rise of Gujarati literature, and that he should therefore be honoured as the Father of that literature, has to be abandoned, and the date of its rise pushed back several centuries.

A scientific treatment of this subject is beyond the scope of a manual like this. But the Form of language can be traced backwards form assumed by the language now current, tracing it step by step backwards from middle and old Gujarati to Prakrit and Sauskrit, gramatically, is not an impossible thing, as is shown by scholars of the calibre of R. B. Ramanbhai Nilkanth and Messrs. Keshavlal Dhruva and N. B. Divatia. Phonetic changes, the formation of new words by analogy, and various other elements which contribute to the evolution of a language have also influenced Gujarati at various periods of its growth, and the curious reader would find much to interest him in the works of these scholars.*

* The following is a short table given to show changes introduced into Sanskrit words in their passage, from Sanskrit into Gujarati through Prakrit,

सं.	पनस	पिबति	तीक्ष्णम्
प्रा.	फणसो	पिअइ	तिक्खं
जुनी गु.	पिअइ	,,
गु.	फणस	पीए	तीखुं



CHAPTER III.

BHAKTI MÂRGA AND POETS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

It has been remarked somewhere that poetry and religion are inseparable in India. This is eminently true of early Gujarati poetry. The trend of it, even before the time of Narsinh and Miranbai, was religious. The Râsâs have their origin in the desire of the Jain Sadhus to teach religion and morals to the masses through a tongue spoken by them, and the poems treating of the social and domestic concerns of the people are very few in number compared with those relating to morals and religion. Consequently, when we emerge on the period, beginning with 1400 A. D., where we have got more solid ground to rest upon, in the shape of more known and more popular works, we must not be surprised to find a continuity in the subject matter of poetical compositions. Religion in various forms, constituted the staple food of most of these singers. The Jains praised their own saints, Mahâvîr and the Tîrthankars, and in the non-Jains, the worship assumed a shape of devotion to Lord Krishṇa and was called the Bhakti Mârگا.

A very able exposition of this subject is made by Mr. L. J. Sedgwick, I. C. S., in a lecture printed in Vol. XXIII, No. LXV of the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the

Bhakti Mârگا or
Krishṇa worship.

Royal Asiatic Society (1910). He describes *Bhakti* to be "personal faith in a personal God, love for him as for a human being, the dedication of everything to his service, and the attainment of *Moksha** by this means, rather than by knowledge or sacrifice, or works." Leaving the Upanishads aside, he finds the first germ of this cult in the Bhagavad Gîtâ, and specially in Chapter IX (26-29) which he translates thus:—

"He who with *Bhakti* makes me (Krishṇa) an offering of a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I accept it (lit; eat it) because it is offered with *Bhakti*, and comes from one whose personality is pure. Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give away, whatever penance you perform, O Son of Kunti, do it as if offered to me. Thus you will be released from the bonds of *Karma* with their fruits both pleasant and unpleasant, and being released, and having your personality filled with renunciation and *Yoga*, you will attain to me. I am alike in the case of all living things. One

* The same idea, but in a more developed form had been put forward in 1892 by a Gujarati scholar of acknowledged ability, Mr. Govardhanram M. Tripathi, B. A., LL. B., in his "Classical Poets of Gujarat and their Influence on Society and Morals." He thus describes *Bhakti*. "The soul and spirit of this new religion was *Bhakti*, a word which, with its numerous associations, has no English word for it. Worship, prayer and even devotion are words which fall short of the full connotation of *Bhakti*. It means, standing in the presence of God, serving Him, loving Him, being loved by Him, talking to Him, seeing Him, hearing Him, and in fact enjoying the Deity."

is not hateful to me, nor another dear. But they who worship me with Bhakti, they are in me and I in them.”*

This idea marks the first stage of this cult, namely, “the conception of personal dedication of self, and the things of self to God. The idea of mutual affection was still to be evolved.” It came centuries after.

The second wave of Bhakti came about a thousand years later, and it took a literary shape. In the meanwhile the worship of Krishṇa, the boy cowherd, had taken a strong root in a very large portion of the Indian continent. Various views have been put forward to explain the origin of this personality. Some say he was a syncretism. They speculate that Krishṇa was the result of several contradictory characters being combined into one: a drunken brawler and robber of Dwarka, a dark sungod, a wild lovable hero of the North-West valleys and the child of Mathura,—these four persons blended made up one divine Krishṇa. This is the opinion of a European scholar quoted by Mr. Sedgwick. It is a theory which no Indian mind will

* पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
 तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥
 यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
 यत्तपस्यसि कौंतेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ २७ ॥
 शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्षये कर्मबन्धनैः ।
 संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ २८ ॥
 समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
 ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥ २९ ॥

be prepared to accept without doing great violence to its sentiment. Attempts have also been made to connect Krishṇa with the worship of the divine child of Christianity. But it is not material for us to find out and account for the origin of this phase of emotional religion in India. The fact is there that about the eleventh century it had spread largely over India. In South India Râma seems to have received the attention of Bhaktas; in North Central India and Bengal,* Krishṇa; in the Deccan and West Karnatic, Viṭṭhala. The names are different, (Râma, Hari, Krishṇa, Viṭṭhala) but the spirit in which the Bhakti is offered to them is the same. The effects of this wave, a highly developed Bhakti, which now meant mutual affection, partaking of physical emotion, and, what is more important, ignoring all caste distinctions (even a low caste man can obtain this best of all spiritual treasures by Bhakti) seem to have touched Gujarat somewhere about the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century, and produced the two celebrated singers Mirân Bâi (1403-1470) and Narsinh Mehtâ† (1414-1481).

* Jayadev, the famous Bihari poet wrote his immortal Gita Govinda, a rhapsody on the amours of Krishṇa and Râdhâ in the twelfth century. It is translated into English by Sir Edwin Arnold as the Song of the Lord.

† From his Presidential speech delivered at the inaugural meeting of the first Gujarati Literary Conference at Ahmedabad in 1905, Mr. Govardhanram Tripathi seems to be of opinion that this flame of Bhakti began to burn in the bosoms of Mirân Bâi and Narsinh Mehtâ of its own accord, i. e., they were both uninfluenced by the preachings or teachings

Colonel Todd, the celebrated historian of Rajputana, thus alludes to Mirân Bâi. "Kumbho (the brave Rânâ of Mewar who succeeded to his father's throne in A. D. 1491) married a daughter of Mairta (correctly Meṭṭâ), the first of the clans of Marwar. Meera Bai was the most celebrated princess of her time for beauty and romantic piety. Her compositions were numerous, though better known to the worshippers of the Hindu Apollo, than to the ribald bards. Some of her odes and hymns to the deity are preserved and admired. Whether she imbibed her poetic piety from her husband or whether from her he caught the sympathy which produced the "sequel to the Songs of Govinda" (Gîta Govinda), we cannot determine. Her history is a romance and her excess of devotion at every shrine of the favourite deity

of any outsider. Vallabhâchârya, the great founder of the Krishna-worship cult on the western side of India, came later, (he was born in 1479 A. D.), and Chaitanya, who spread Vaishnavism in Bengal, was born a few years after (1485). Surdas who wrote on Râdhâ and Krishna in Hindi also flourished later, so that he is of opinion that these two poets struck out a path for themselves independently of any teachings from outside Gujarat—a circumstance not very likely. As against this is to be considered the following theory of his put forward in his Classical Poets (p. 19) "It seems the missionaries of the new religion of Bhakti were roaming about the whole of Gujarat at this time [he is describing the time in which Mirân Bâi and Narsinh Mehtâ wrote] and charming the people with a religion, which, while it allowed people like Mirân to pass an ascetic life, peopled their brains with the fairyland visions of Krishna."

with the fair (sex) of Hind from the Yamuna to the "World's end" (Dwárká), gave rise to many tales of scandal."

There is a great conflict of opinion as to the time when Mirân Bâi was born and lived. Incidents in her life. The generally received date is somewhere near A. D. 1403. She is said to have lived for 67 years, and died in 1470. In her case, however, very scant correct biographical details can be had, because whatever little we know about her is hedged round with romantic incidents; for instance, it is said that Emperor Akbar and his famous musician Tânsen went to visit her. Now that would take her down to the sixteenth century A. D. The historian of Mewar, Deviprasad, and the famous poet of the same province, Kavi Samaldas, try to make her out to be the wife not of Kumbho, but of Bhojraj. Some make her the daughter-in-law of Rânâ Sanga who fought so valiantly against Babar. The question as to whose wife she was is not of any importance, for she did not agree with her husband and her husband's people. She was brought up as a follower of Vishṇu, while her husband and his people worshipped Śiva, and the dispute occurred on the very first night after her marriage. From some of her songs one would gather that she had made up her mind to marry only the Lord of her heart, Krishṇa, and that she did not want to have any corporeal husband, but that against her wishes she was joined in wedlock to the Rânâ of Mewar, and that,

as soon as she was asked by her husband's sister to bow to Mahâdev, she refused to do so, and said that she had dedicated herself to Krishṇa. The Rânâ then tried various means to bring his fair spouse to book, but all to no purpose. Similarly Mirân also tried to persuade him to adopt her tenets of belief, but the Rânâ was found to be obdurate, and she ultimately left his protection and went to Dwârkâ, where she passed the rest of her life in serving Krishṇa, and consorting with his followers, mostly Sadhus. Even in her husband's house, she was behaving in that way, and this naturally gave rise to a great deal of scandal, which the Rânâ ultimately wanted to put a stop to by giving her poison. She took it, but by a miracle it was changed to nectar. The following verses of hers mention some of these coercive measures adopted by her husband.*

* गोविन्दो प्राण अमारो रे, मने जग लाग्यो खारो रे;
 मने मारो रामजी भावे रे, बीजो मारी नजरे न आवे रे.
 मीरांबाईना महेलमां रे, हरि संतननो वास;
 कपटीथी हरी दूर वसे, मारा संतन केरी पास. गोविन्दो.
 राणोजी कागळ मोकले रे, दो राणी मीरांने हाथ;
 साधुनी संगत छोडी द्यो, तमो वसोने अमारो साथ. गोविन्दो.
 मीरांबाई कागळ मोकलेरे, देजो राणाजीने हाथ;
 राजपाट तमे छोडी राणाजी, वसो साधुने साथ. गोविन्दो.
 विषनो प्यालो राणे मोकल्यो रे, देजो मीरांने हाथ;
 अमृत जाणी मीरां पी गयां, जेने सहाय श्री विश्वनो नाथ. गोविन्दो.
 सांडवाळा सांड शणगारजे रे, जाबुं सो सो रे कोश;
 राणाजीना देशमां रे मारे, जळ रे पीधानो दोष. गोविन्दो.

“Govind (Krishṇa) is my Lord and for the whole world I feel a dislike. I adore my Rāmji, none other is worth anything in my eye. In the palace of Mirân Bâi live those (Sadhus) who love Hari. Hari lives away from the falsehearted (men like the Rânâ), but He always lives near my Sadhus. The Rânâ sends a letter to be delivered into the hands of Mirân in which he asks her to give up the company of the Sadhus and live with him. Miran sends a reply to be delivered into the hands of the Rânâji, requesting him to abdicate his throne and live in the society of the Sadhus. The Rânâ sent a cup full of poison to be given to Mirân, and she drank it off, taking it to be nectar, and she had the assistance of the Lord of the world. O camelman ! equip your camel, I have to travel hundreds of miles. I consider it (now) a sin even to drink water in the territory of the Rânâji. She left Mewar, to her left, and Mirân went towards the west. She left her all because she had no love for the world (Maya).

डाबो मेल्यो मेवाड रे, मीरां गई पश्चिम मांय;
 सरख छोडी मीरां नीसर्या, जेनुं मायामां मनडुं न कांय. गोविन्दो.
 सासु अमारी सषुमणा रे, ससरो प्रेम संतोष;
 जेठ जगजीवन जगतमां मारो, नावलियो निर्दोष. गोविन्दो.
 चुंदडी ओढुं त्यारे रंग चुवेरे, रंग बेरंगी होय;
 ओढुं हुं काळो कांबळो, दुजो डाघ न लागे कोय. गोविन्दो.
 मीरां हरीनी लाडणी रे, रहती संत हज़र;
 साधु संगते स्नेह घणो, पेला कपटीथी दिल दूर. गोविन्दो.

સુવર્ણ* is my mother-in-law and contentment in religious love my father-in-law, Jagajīvan (God) is my husband's elder brother and Innocence is my husband. When I wear my wedding garment, its dye drips (disappears) and the colour fades in course of time; hence I prefer to wear a black blanket that will not alter (lit., which nothing can stain again).† Mirân was the favourite of Hari and lived with Sadhus. She had great love for them but her heart was turned away from that insincere person."

Her husband tried to gain her heart by decking her with jewels and gorgeous raiment, but she pushed these gifts aside. "I will die in a hut unadorned and without earthly treasure. My crown of glory is borne on the brow of him to whom I am devoted—my beloved Krishna, Lord of my heart." Her love for her husband was, she sings in a song, like that for a piece of cactus. Under these circumstances living together was impossible and she lived apart, where she passed her whole time in the company of Sadhus. This considerably scandalised the Rânâ and as stated above he wanted to do away with her. Poison proved ineffectual.* He then tried to put her to death with his dagger, but as soon as he raised it, he saw four Mirâns instead of one, and he could not make up his mind

* • A particular but imaginary artery of the human body said to lie between હૃદય and ધિગલ, two of the tubular vessels of the body, according to the anatomy of the Yoga Philosophy.

† Married life being likely to come in the way of her union with God, she desired to renounce the world

as to which it was who was his wife.¶ He then sent her a venomous cobra concealed in a basket, which usually contained the idol of Krishṇa, but even this device failed, and then it was that Mirân deported herself from Mewar and went to Dwârkâ.

Mirân Bâi was not a born Gujarati, and she must have acquired a knowledge of the language after she came to Dwârkâ.

Her verses. Her verses are found composed in Hindi also. No separate collection of her compositions exists, but they lie scattered about in various books and number about two hundred and fifty. Mirân Bâi's great popularity especially with the fair sex, has produced a crowd of imitators, who have passed off their own verses under her name. Unless this is assumed, it would be difficult to account for the extreme modernity of the language, phrases and idioms, and for the frequent recurrence of the same phrases and idioms in some of the poems which are counted amongst her compositions.

Like the Persian Sufi, who sees in God his beloved, Mirân saw in Krishṇa her beloved, and she dedicated herself completely, body and soul, to him.*

- For example take the following lines:

प्रेमनी प्रेमनी प्रेमनी रे, मने लागी कटारी प्रेमनी.

जळ जमुनामां भरवा गयांतां, हती गागर माथे हेमनी रे. मने.

काचे ते तांतणे हरिजीए बांधी, जेम खेंचे तेम तेमनी रे. मने.

मीरां कहे प्रभु गीरधर नागर, शामळी सुरत शुभ एमनी रे. मने.

Mirân Bâi's songs on the surface seem to be mere erotic verse. This interpretation is never put upon them in Gujarat. The object of her devotion is no earthly lover but her ideal Krishṇa. The songs are really the ejaculations of a devout soul trying to express in the terms of human love her ardent desire to be united with her deity. Mothers and daughters sing them together in the Garbās,* which men and women gather together to witness, and no one thinks that there is anything improper or harmful in listening to the sweet garbi† of Mirân Bâi being sung or repeated. On the contrary, there is quite a *furore* created when they are being sung. She is one of those very few poets, whose verses and names have become household words in Gujarat.‡

With Narsinh Mehta (1415-1481 A. D.) we enter upon firmer biographical ground. He was Narsinh Mehta. a Nāgar Brahmin of Junagadh in Kathiawad, and was left an orphan in the care of his cousin and his cousin's wife. The caste to which he belonged

* A garbā is a singing party or a musical *seance*, where men but oftener women, move round and round in a circle and sing to the accompaniment of a rhythmical and uniform clap of hands.

† A garbi means a song or poem generally recited by ladies.

‡ A very instructive article on her works is to be found in the Magh, Chaitra and Vaiśakh (1966) issues of the "Vasant" written by Bhanusukhram N. Mehta, B. A. Her life is recently written by Mr. T. M. Tripathi. B. A., in the Brihat Kāvya Dohan, Vol VII.

was composed entirely of the worshippers of Śiva, while he had from early life taken to Kṛishṇa worship. He used to spend much time with Sadhus, encamped on the outskirts of the town, and sing and dance in their company, sometimes in the garb of a woman to personate the Gopi (cowherdess) of Vraj. This naturally scandalised his family and caste-men, and his father-in-law broke off his betrothal with his daughter. But later on, he was married to another girl and when the time came for him to live the life of a householder, it found him penniless and entirely dependent on his cousin. The latter's wife taunted him with his utter uselessness. She said "even the washing stone of a washerman was more useful." He took it to heart and went away to a retired place called Gopnāth on the sea shore, and there worshipped Mahādev with a vow that he would go back to his home only if the god fulfilled his wishes. Pleased with his devotion and austerity, he took him to Dwārakā, where he was shown that most famous incident, rarely seen by human eyes, in the life of Kṛishṇa, viz., the Rās Līlā (Kṛishṇa's dance with sixteen thousand Gopis). This settled his future as a specially favoured devotee of Kṛishṇa, and he returned to his home fully inspired and invigorated, and thanked his cousin's wife for the taunt which resulted in his obtaining a vision of the Lord.*

* भाभीए भाग्य उदे कयों, नने कथां ते कठिण वचन,
त्यारे नरसैयो निरस्य धयां, पान्यो ते जुगजीवन.

Thereafter he separated from his cousin and began to live with his wife and had two or three children by her. He lived in a state of chronic poverty. He passed the whole day in devotional singing and dancing, and did nothing to earn a livelihood. His wife by means of taunts and by retiring at times to her father's house, often tried to induce him to do something but he was incorrigible. His only answer was "I was always like this."* The children grew up and had to be married, and for that purpose the impecunious devotee of Krishna depended on him, and the tradition is that he did help him and got both his son and daughter married.

Soon after this difficulty was over, Narsinh Mehta's wife died and she was followed by her son. His daughter had already gone to her husband's house, and he felt at one bound, discharged from all his worldly obligations, and free to follow unreservedly the bent of his mind. The poem he wrote at this time breathes all the spirit of a bird liberated from its cage. The verses† have become proverbial amongst Gujaratis to show the relief a man feels when he gets rid of all his obligations, leaving him free to worship Gopāl.

* एवा रे अमे एवा रे एवा, तमे कहोछो बळी तेवा रे.

† भलं थयुं भांगी जंजाळ, सुखे भजीशुं श्री गीपाळ.

It was at this time that the most famous incident in his life occurred. According to him, Association with Dheds. in the sight of Krishṇa, all his devotees were equal, be they low caste Dheds or high caste Brahmins. He was called upon to put this belief to a practical test. The Dhed caste, as a rule, is religious, and shows its devotion by the singing of Bhajans* and dancing, individually and collectively. The Dheds of Junagadh requested Narsinh Mehta to go to their quarter and join them in their devotional exercises of singing and dancing, and he complied at once with the request.† He passed the whole night in close association with this untouchable community, and paid the penalty by being out-casted. He was formally debarred from attending caste dinners. One night Krishṇa appeared to him in a dream and urged him to attend one caste-dinner at least. He did attend one and began to sing songs in praise of Krishṇa. The Nagars, his caste fellows, to their horror saw that in the rows of diners, there was one Dhed sitting between every two of them. But when they asked

* Psalms or devotional hymns.

† In describing this incident he sings,

पक्षापक्षी त्यां नहि परमेश्वर, समदृष्टिं सर्व समान.

Where there is favouritism, there is no God; to one who looks equally upon all, all are equal. Recalling the words of the Gītā

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च, पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः । अ. ५. श्लोक १८

To learned men, all are equal: a learned and modest Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a chāṇḍāl.

Mehta to sit with them this illusion disappeared. They felt ashamed of their conduct and acknowledged the sincerity of Narsinh Mehta's belief and took him back into their fold.

The ruler of Junagadh, Râ Mandlik was a worshipper
of Śiva and his mother of Krishna.

A miracle.

She is said to have occasionally helped Narsinh Mehta. But her son did not like this, and matters were brought to a crisis by the king inviting Narsinh Mehta to enter into a religious contest with a sannýási, a follower of Śiva. Narsinh Mehta was dubbed a hypocrite and a cheat, because he danced and consorted with women under the guise of Râs Lîlâ. He was called upon to furnish some sign of his God being a true and living God, in other words to show some miracle. The miracle did come and Krishna presented himself as a corporeal being in the court of the king and garlanded his devotee. The king's mother died sometime after, and whatever little help Narsinh Mehta used to get from her, was stopped. His caste-men ever afterwards ill-treated him, and he died at the age of sixty-six. They, however, expiated for their sins against him by at least performing his last rites without any hesitation, and they are even now expiating for them by proudly proclaiming that the Chaucer of Gujarati literature came of their caste.

There are twenty miracles mentioned in the sketch

of Narsinh Mehta's life given by the
More miracles. late Mr. Ichharam S. Desai. Some of

them have been given above. Others are, that on one

occasion Krishṇa accepted a Hundi written by Narsinh Mehta for Rs. 700/ in favour of some pilgrims, in order to keep his respectability unblemished. On another occasion he (Krishṇa) fully supplied the presents to be given to his daughter's relatives-at-law, when her first pregnancy ceremony was to be observed. The four most outstanding ones have been versified by Premānand who succeeded him, two hundred years after, in language so sweet and simple, that to-day every man and woman in Gujarat sings them.*

There is a Chorâ (a platform) enclosed by a building in Junagadh, even now, which is called Narsinh Mehta's Chorâ. There is an image of his favourite god there, and the place is looked upon as a cherished memento of a great religious poet, and latterly, on the day of his anniversary, devout and educated Nagars have begun to recall his influence and his work by means of celebrations of various kinds, literary and religious.

His chief works are, Hâramâlâ (some persons question his authorship of this work), Châturi Shodaśî, Châturi Chhatriśî, Śāmaladās no Vivāh, Dāṇalîlâ, Govind Gaman, about 1,000 Paḍas† on Devotion and Erotics (Śringâr), and Surat Sangrām.

* They are

१ कुंवरबाईनुं मामेहें.

२ नरसिंह महेताना बापनुं श्राद्ध.

३ शामळदासनो विवाह.

४ नरसिंह महेतानी हुंडी.

(Narsinh Mehta has also got a poem on the last subject).

† Hymns.

The tradition is that he has in all composed one and a quarter lacs of Paḍas. When he had finished one lac, death came to him, but his soul would not leave his body till the 25,000 had been finished. His widowed daughter-in-law then seeing the pain he was in, promised to make them up in his name by means of her own compositions. Thus assured, he died peacefully and she fulfilled her promise. Others say he was reincarnated as the famous Lâlâ Bhagat of Sâylâ, and finished them, and some believe that Dayârâm, who came in the nineteenth century, was in his former birth Narsinh Mehtâ.

His works can roughly be divided into two kinds:—
 Nature of his works. Śringâr (love-poems) and Bhakti (devotional poems). The Śringâr was meant ultimately to merge into Bhakti, though to a lay mind which contemplates only the outward significance of the words, it is difficult to comprehend how the sentiments and actions so openly described could be construed into devotion. As a sample of pure Śringâr, there have been selected a few verses, which seem open to least objection in being translated. The occasion described is this, that a lady messenger, called Lalitâ, was sent by Kṛishṇa to call his beloved Râdhâ, and she was able to entice her to meet Kṛishṇa alone.

“The Prince took her with him and brought her to the grove. A retired spot was selected, Śringâr. a bed was prepared. They then began

to enjoy themselves. Krishna took her close to his bosom, and kissed her on the cheek. The ardent and impassioned lover began to enjoy the pleasures of carnal enjoyment.*

There are others in which, what is called उषाढो शृंगार† is too fully treated to be considered unobjectionable for translation here. All the little arts that a woman would use to excite the carnal passions of man, are there described, as practised by the Gopis to win over Krishna. He furnished the key, however, to the interpretation of these, sentiments. Sings he: "Listen you, women. I have led a life of continence from birth. I am not known (as such) to the bulk of mankind—a rare person knows it. Even the Vedas can not fathom me (my mystery). Nârada, Sanaka and others extol me. The credit of knowing me belongs either to the Gopi of Vraj, or to the poet Jayadeva (the author of Gîta Govinda) who knew what love for me means.‡ Once Krishna is said to have gone to give water to Narsinh Mehta when thirsty

* कुंज समिपे आवीया कुंवरीने तेडी कुमार,
एकान्त स्थाने रची शैया, मळी करे रे विहार.
भूधरे भीडी हृदयं, चुंबन लीधुं गाल,
रसीओ ते रस प्रीति पीए, कंदप रस रसाळ.

† Erotic songs wherein love is depicted undisguised or without regard to the rules of decorum.

‡ सुणो तमे नारी, अमे ब्रह्मचारी, अमने ते कोई एक जाणे रे,
वेद भेद लहे नहि मारो, सनकादिक नारद वखाणे रे;
एक जाणे छे व्रजनी गोपी, के रस जयदेवे पीधो रे. शृंगारमाळा.

in the shape of a beautiful woman. He says that on looking at such a woman you are to drop from your eyes the scales of physical passion, and if you do so, you will find in her none other than Lord Krishna.*

The love songs of Mirân Bâi are indeed sweeter in language and chaster in sentiments, at least in their expression, than those of her male contemporary. They breathe all the gentleness of a woman's heart, and are restrained in their tone, the poetess being unable naturally to get rid of the limitations of her sex. As a result, her compositions are far more in vogue, and, as a matter of course, more generously read and recited by the generality of people.

Narsinh's pure Bhakti verses stand, however, on a different footing. They are resonant with all the echoes of the religious philosophy of India, and go to show how far, in spite of his Krishna worship, Narsinh Mehta was saturated with that philosophy. He says to man, "Pray to God, give up your love for the world, consider your origin. Who are you? To whom have you attached yourself? Without knowing its significance, you say this is mine, this is mine. If you observe it well, you will find that even your body is not yours; even if you want to keep it, it will not abide, it will perish as a certainty. The body

* व्यभिचार मूकी जुवो विचारी, एतो नरसैयाचा स्वाामीरे.

leaves its old connections and forms new ones.* Son, wife and family disappear. You are always, night and day, thinking of wealth, which acts as a great barrier to salvation. The One dear to the heart was near you, but you recognised Him not and now you have lost this game. Your waiting has come to naught. You were asleep, but why could not the words of the holy men awake you? Narsinh says, it is a great shame that you did not wake. If you had awakened, the misery of life after life (i. e., of being born again and again) would have gone.”†

There are numbers of other poems couched in more philosophical language than that used here, and there are a few composed in simpler language, and called Matutinals or morning songs. The peculiarity about these latter is, that they are intended to be sung or chanted, the first thing in the early dawn, and are replete with the praises of Krishna, pieces of advice

* In practice it is the other way: the soul severs its connection with the body and forms fresh connections with new bodies.

† समरने श्रीहरी, मेल्य समता परी, जोने विचारीने मूल तारं,
तुं अल्या कोण ने कोने वळगी रह्यो, वगर समजे कहे महारं महारं-समरने.
देह तारी नथी जो तुं जुगते करी, राखतां नव रहे निश्चे जाये,
देह संबंध तजे, नवनवां बहु थसो, पुत्र कलत्र परिवार वहाये-समरने.
धन तणुं ध्यान तुं अहोनिश आदरे, एज तारे अंतराय म्होटी,
पासे छे पियु अल्या, तेने नव परखियो, हाथथी बाजी गई थयो रे खोटी-समरने.
भरनिद्रा भयों, रोंधी घेयों घणो, संतना शब्द मुणी कां न जागे,
न जागतां नरसैया लाज छे अति घणी, जन्मोजन्म तारी खांत भागे-समरने.

on philosophical texts, and their tone is one of sweet reasonableness, though they appear to be cast in the mould of reproach to humanity for its remissness. If the very first word that a man utters when he wakes, if the very first sentiments that he breathes when his eyes open, be of God and about God, nothing but good will come to him. This is the *motif* with which they are written. Some of these are extremely popular, and it is not unusual for early risers to hear one another reciting these **प्रभातीभिः*** with great fervour. This is not a new thing with Hindus. The Abhangas of Tukârâm are utilised in exactly the same way by the natives of the Deccan, and the late Mr. Justice Ranade always used to wake up, as his wife tells us in his Life, at four o'clock in the morning with some verse or other of Tukârâm on his lips.

The deep philosophical meaning which underlies some of his poems, and which forms the most prominent feature of others, is not discussed here in detail. For instance, the allegory of the Râs Lilâ, the dance of the Gopist with Krishṇa, a vision which the poet was permitted to see in Swarga‡ by the grace of Śiva, is to be understood as the dance of the human heart with Hari. The subject is rather abstruse for the common reader.

* Morning songs.

† Milkmaids or cowherdesses of Vraj, translated as "Sylvan Maids" by Sir Edwin Arnold.

‡ The paradise.

In his style there is nothing antique or pedantic. In discussing philosophy, he is not so hard as Akho, while in his Śringār he is not so happy as Dayārām nor so lyrical as Mirān. The language in which he wrote is not preserved. Occasionally terminations like the genitive **ના** point to an old form of Gujarati which preserved it in common with the Marathi, which is traceable to a common stock.

There are two minor poets who belong to this period:

Bhālaṇ (A. D. 1439-1539) and Bhīma
 Bhālaṇ. (A. D. 1484). Bhālaṇ was by caste a

Śrīmālī Brahmin and belonged to Pātan. As the capital of Gujarat was at this time free from any political disturbance, the neglected study of Sanskrit was again taken up, and it is from this point of view that the works of both these comparatively obscure poets deserve mention. They had so far advanced also in their love for Gujarati, that instead of composing in Sanskrit, as their study of it would have prompted them to do, they rather worked the other way. They translated Sanskrit works into Gujarati. Bhālaṇ translated the celebrated romance-Kādambarī of Bāṇa Bhatt into Gujarati, and Bhīma the Bhāgavat of Bopdeva. The former is a secular work, while the latter is religious; what prompted Bhālaṇ to thus travel out of the beaten path of writing religious poetry, we are unable to say. But he has tried his pen in that direction also, and his poems comprise different incidents in the lives of Rāma, Kṛishṇa and Śiva. The conclusion he wants to impress on the

reader is that, although they appear to be different, still the Bhakta of the one is the Bhakta of the other, and that he is after all, one God with different names. His two long poems, viz., *Chandî Âkhyân* (narrative of the goddess Chandî or Kâli) and *Nalâkhyân* have no special merit, and verse to verse the latter is greatly inferior to that of his successor Premânand in expression, style and narration. The same remark applies to the language of Bhâlaṇ as to that of Narsinh Mehta, regarding the use of words of the old common stock, for instance, the word **आई** for mother is persistently used by him. Bhâlaṇ's works are many.* In some he has traversed the same ground which Premânand traversed some centuries later. He is most remembered by one of his songs, beginning with **साम्बळ रे तुं सजनी मारी रजनी क्यां रमी आवाजी†**, where the secret meeting of a Gopi with Krishna and their nocturnal adventures are exposed by means of certain tell-tale signs on the body of the former. The dialogue is full of vivacity and replete with exchanges of repartee between the Gopi and her friend, who finds her secret out.

Bhîma was a Modh Brahmin of Siddhapur Pâtan, and his poetry is principally taken up with the Bhâgavat of Bopdev. In very quaint Gujarati he says that he narrates the story of the Bhâgavat

* दशमस्कंध; नळाख्यान; सप्तशती; रामायण; शिव भीलडी संवाद; कादम्बरी; ध्रुवाख्यान.

† This very same garbi is attributed to Dayârâm also.

on the strength of Bopdeva, and is trying to quench the thirst of the people as from a well on the shores of a lake.

The historical poem of Paḍmanābha, a Visalnagarā Nāgar Brahmin, merits special mention. Paḍmanābha and his historical work. ✱ Written in A. D. 1456 (Samvat year 1512) at Zālōr in Western Mārwad, Kahānad De Prabandha is unique in early Gujarati literature. It describes in great detail the invasion and conquest of Gujarat and Kathiawad by Alaf Khān, the renowned lieutenant of Alāud-dīn Khiljī, in the preceding century. The extinction of Hindu rule from Anhilwād Pātan, the sack of Sonmāth Pātan, the varying fortunes in war of both the combatants, the supreme courage displayed by the Rajputs who were able to beat back some three or four times the vast armies from the North, the helplessness of the Hindus in the face of their water-supply being cut off by the pollution of the water in the lake by the blood of slaughtered cows, and the ultimate betrayal by some faithless Rajput of Kahānad De, the Prince of Zālōr, who withstood a siege by Alāud-dīn for twelve years, are described with great force by the poet. Indeed while reading some of his lines you feel the blood coursing more rapidly in your veins, in sympathy with the patriotic feeling running through the graphic narration of certain events, such as the defiant answer sent by Kahānad to Alāud-dīn that he would not allow the army of a Mahomedan king to pass through his territories for the purpose of invading a Hindu kingdom, or the state of utter panic in

Delhi when the Sultán was informed that Kahânad De had defeated and destroyed his army.

A few lines from the description of this rout and panic shows both the state of the language at the time as well as the style of the poet.

जे जे तुरक नासी उबल्या
एक ठामि जइ जंगलि मिल्या
एक उवाडा वख विहीण
भूखई करी एक थाइ स्त्रीण
एक घूमन्ता जाइ घाइ
एक डोली उपाड्या जाइ
* * * * *
अलुखान अंधारुं करी
वख एक मुखि अंतरि धरी
* * * * *

भागा तणी वात इम छाणे
ठाम ठाम रोइ तुरकणी
* * * * *
एक फाडइ पहिरणि सुथणो
पाए नेउर भाजइ घणी
एक लाखइ एकाडलि हार
एक उतारइ सवि सिंगार
* * * * *
एक तणा बंधव भरतार
एक तणा कुदरा कुमार

“Those Mahomedans who were able to escape gathered together in one place in the forest. Some were stripped naked, others worn out with hunger. Some were tottering on account of wounds, others had to be carried in *doolies*. * * * * * Alafkhân entered (Delhi) in darkness with a cloth over his face. * * * * * Everywhere did the Mahomedan ladies (in Delhi) weep, hearing the news of the flight * * * * * Some (ladies) tore their shirts, others their skirts (trousers). Many broke the anklets on their feet, some threw away their precious pearl necklaces and others took off all their ornaments. * * * * * Some

had lost their brothers and husbands while others had lost their handsome sons.'"

It will be seen that the original language in which Padmanābha wrote is preserved in this poem, while that of his contemporaries, Narsinh Mehta and Mirān Bāi, has undergone such a change that it is impossible to distinguish it from modern Gujarati. The reason is that the work never became popular. It did not lose its original form in being communicated from mouth to mouth, as was the case with the works of Narsinh Mehta and Mirān Bāi. Indeed it was rescued from oblivion by Dr. Bühler in A. D. 1875-76, who secured a manuscript copy written by two Jain Sādhus in A. D. 1550. The Jains took it to be some work written by a Jain (and its name *Kahānad De Prabandha* lent color to that belief, as Prabandhas are written by Jains) and they kept it in their Bhandār at Tharād, near Pālanpur. Its importance as a philological find was never appreciated till very recently.*

The first epoch of Gujarati poetry closes here. The devotion of the Bhakta to Krishna sung both in lyrical and philosophical verse, is the marked feature of the period. Narsinh and Mirān

* The poem has been edited by Dabhyabhai P. Derāsari, Esq., Barrister-at-law, who read a valuable paper on the subject at the Third Gujarati Sāhitya Parishad at Rajkot in A. D. 1909. I am indebted to that paper for the above summary.

Bâi, both quarrelled with their nearest and dearest to devote themselves to Krishna and each was rewarded with the vision beatific, the description of which they have sung in numbers, which still appeal to the hearts of men and women of Gujarat.



CHAPTER IV.

POETS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The sixteenth century is a period of comparative barrenness. The Subās of Gujarat were slowly becoming independent of the central Pathan authority at Delhi which itself was weakening. The most powerful of these rulers, Sultan Mohamed Begda, also lost ground, and political anarchy was the result. Akbar conquered Gujarat in 1573 A. D., but even then the state of internal disturbance could not be put an end to. The times were too unfavourable for the gentle plant of poetry to grow or prosper, and we have got three poets only to rescue the period from the reproach of utter barrenness. They are Vasto, Vachharāj and Tulsi.

Vasto was a Pāṭīḍar (Kunbi) of Borsad in the Kaira district. His profession was that of an agriculturist, but early in life, he renounced the world and its ways, and remained a bachelor, passing his time in the company of Sādhus and sannyasis. His two poems, Śukadevākhyān and Subhadṛā Harāṇ follow the vein of Narsinh Mehta. They are narrative poems.

Vachharāj was a follower of the famous religious leader Kabir of Upper India, and hailed from Jambusar, a place of some importance near Broach. His poem, Ras Manjari, is a collection of stories, which show the innate intelligence of the gentler sex when it comes to serving their own ends. It is a secular

piece, and foreshadows the line which Sâmal Bhat was to follow so brilliantly later.

Tulsi was a Sâraswat Brahmin of Kutiana, near
Tulsi. Junagadh, and he has narrated the sad
experiences of little Dhruva who was
banished from his home, and who by observing the strictest
of penances in the forest, pleased God. The tale of
Dhruva, like a number of other incidents in the Râmâ-
yaṇi and Mahâbhârata, has formed the staple of many
poems, early and late. In these works, however, "one
clearly feels the quickening of the genius of the next
century which was to burst upon the country with a
regular shower of great poets, and with a variegated luxi-
ance of beautiful and powerful poetry."*

* The Classical Poets of Gujarat, by G. M. Tripathi.

CHAPTER V.

POETS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The first of the brilliant group of three, dominating this century is Akhâ (1615-1675 A. D.), styled Bhagat (a devotee of God), a goldsmith by caste. He came from Ahmedabad, some say from a village called Jetalpur near Ahmedabad, whence he migrated to the city. Early in life the death of his sister weaned him away from the pleasures of the world, and sowed in him the seeds of that Vairâgya (retirement from the world) which influenced his life to such a great extent. Several incidents, coming one in the wake of another, set him absolutely in opposition to the so called ways of the world. The belief in Gujarat, crystallised into a proverb, is that a goldsmith will not let even his own sister escape without stealing a little gold from the quantity entrusted to him. A lady, whom he loved more than his sister, once gave him some gold to be made into a necklace. It was worth Rs. 300. Out of affection for her, he added Rs. 100 from his own pocket, and made an ornament worth Rs. 400. The lady was very much pleased with the jewellery, but on talking over the matter with a friend, it was suggested that it was not possible to find a goldsmith who would act so very much against the instincts of his craft. Accordingly the necklace was tested by being broken up, and it was found that it contained gold worth more than Rs. 300. She went

back to Akhâ to get it made whole, and on being pressed to inform him as to how the ornament came to be broken, she made a clean breast of the whole affair. Akhâ was convinced that there was no room for good men in the world, and that it consisted wholly of dishonest men and rogues who would not appreciate honesty in others.

As the head of the royal mint at Ahmedabad, he was the victim of the machinations of some of his caste people, who charged him with alloying the silver with baser metals in minting coins. The Nawab put him into prison first, and then enquired into the matter and found that he was

Renouncing the
world

innocent. He was set free, but he took the incident so much to heart that he determined to leave the world and its sharp practices. He threw his implements into a well, sold off all his belongings, and started in search of a good, virtuous Master who would show him the Right Path. In Ahmedabad, where he commenced his search first, he failed to find such a guru. He then proceeded to ~~Benares and~~ Allahabad, visiting Jeypore *en route*. The head of the Vallabhâchârya Mandir (temple) there attracted his attention, and he sat at his feet hoping to glean some good things from him. As Akhâ was rich in search of a guru, he was well received, and fed on all the good things which are proverbially to be had in a Vaishnav temple, as the Prasâd (food-offerings) of the Thâkorji (god). His spiritual cravings were however starved, and he left the place to go to Gokul and Mathura where

he met with the same fate. On reaching Benares, he sat at the feet of many saints and Sâdhus, but found none proof against mammon and woman. He stayed long there, and was at last able to stumble upon one who gave him the right teaching. Near the sacrosanct Ghât of Maṇikarnikâ, in an unpretentious hut, he once heard a sannyâsi (ascetic) explaining the tenets of the Vedânta philosophy to only a single disciple. This was a very unusual event in that sacred city, overflowing with students and where the humblest of gurus could muster at least one hundred disciples. He used to hide behind the thin walls of the hut at the reading time, and listen attentively to the lecture. This he did for twelve months, and he was thereupon satisfied that he had discovered his guru. He tried to see if wealth or women would tempt him, and was convinced in the end, that he was proof against both. He, therefore, resolved to put himself under him, and this he did in a very unusual manner. It is usual in these recitals or lectures for the hearer to respond by a guttural sound, or shake of the head to the words of the reader. This is supposed to encourage the reader, as he knows that his audience is wide awake and following him. When the audience is large, some naturally go to sleep and fail to respond. But there are others to make up for the silence and the sleepers are not noticed. But where there is only one individual as the audience, he has to keep awake. In spite of all his efforts this particular hearer happened to go

to sleep on a particular day, and, as it was necessary to keep up the interest of the reading, from behind the wall, Akhâ gave his response. This startled the guru, and on searching about he discovered Akhâ. He was asked the reason of his strange conduct, and he explained the situation, and requested to be received as a pupil. As a proof of his earnestness he mentioned the whole of the Kathâ (story) he had listened to for the last twelve months and the Swâmî was convinced of his great faith in him, and took him as his disciple, and during the three years that he lived there Akhâ studied under him the Pancha Dâśi, the Adhyâtma Râmâyaṇ, the Bhagavad Gîtâ, the Yog Vâsishṭha, the Râmâyaṇ, and other highly technical works on the philosophy of the Vedânta.

On his way back to Ahmedabad he again visited Jeypur.

Interview with old guru. His object was to see how his old guru Gokulanâth, the opulent Vaishṇav Mahârâj, would receive him, now that he

had parted with his worldly wealth, and was rich in the matter of knowledge only. It turned out as he had anticipated. The doorkeeper failed to recognise him and prevented his ingress. He refused to believe that he was Akhâ who, he said, was a very wealthy Shethiâ, and not a beggar like the individual before him. Hearing this discussion, the Mahârâj looked out from his window, and he too, although he recognised Akhâ, repudiated all acquaintance with him. He could very well see that it was his wealth that the Mahârâj had coveted and not him. In his association

with different sects of ascetics (Bâvâs, Vairâgis, Sâdhus) while at Ahmedabad and outside, he had always observed their conduct very carefully and the hypocrisy and loose morals of these people had so disgusted him, that he had determined to spend the whole of his life in exposing them. On the other hand, he had come across some good men too, and he has not failed to render unto them, the meed of praise they properly deserved. While in his works the exposure of deceitful Sâdhus and hypocritical saints predominates, it is not unusual to find those who have passed his test alluded to in terms of great admiration.

Akhâ was a follower of Śankarâchârya.

His works are, Akhegitâ, Chittâ Vichâr Samvâd, Panchî Karaṇ, Guru Śishya Samvâd, Anubhava Bindu, Kaivalya Gîtâ, Brahma Lîlâ (in Hindustani), Paramapada Prâpti and Panchdaśî Tâtparya, which are all of them, as their very names imply, treatises on Vedânta philosophy. They are very abstruse, and fail to yield their secrets or even their ordinary meaning to the uninitiated reader. He has by their very style addressed all of them to the general public, but forgotten that the masses had not gone so far in search of the Parabrahma, as he had done, nor so deep into the mysteries of the Kaivalya and other Vedântic principles as himself. Besides, all philosophy, and especially so hard and abstruse metaphysics as Śankar's Vedânta philosophy, is difficult to versify.

Akhâ's opinion of
ascetics.

Akhâ's works: their
abstruse philosophical
nature.

The poetising of this subject hardly ever renders it attractive, and for this reason, these works of Akhâ have failed to command universal attention. But the fact is otherwise in the case of his seven hundred and forty six Chhappâs (six lined stanzas), and sixty Pâdas in which he has taught some very wholesome lessons about the world and its ways. He has mercilessly but truly torn the mask off the faces of the worldly wise, the so called leaders of the different religious sects, the Sâdhus and the saints, the ascetic and the anchorite, steeped in the Mâyâ (illusion) of the world, and painted the unfavourable aspect of wealth, women, progeny and attendants, friends and relatives, their hollowness and their lip loyalty, in such startling but real colours, that this particular part of his work has permeated the masses, and many of his telling verses have become common literary property, and passed into ordinary household language. His tenet was that your wife, your children, your friends, your relatives and your attendants, all fawned upon you because of your wealth; as soon as that disappeared, they would desert you. The world and its love, the sansâr and its hate, its likes and dislikes, were all unreal. The ways of the world were unreal. The Sâdhus and the sannyâsis were unreal and hypocrites. The one Real Being was the Parabrahma, and to Him should we all turn, leaving "the trappings" of the world to take care of themselves.

Exposure of hypocrisy,
and preaching the unreality of the world.

Akhâ was not a very cultured individual. His language therefore is far from classical. It is like rough unhewn stone, for all that for some purposes it is effective. For

Akhâ's style, satire, caustic criticism, and fearless exposure, it is hard to beat him. He is unequalled in Gujarati. He lashes vices with a heavy whip but the range of his satire is limited. He repeats himself, thus a selection of his satires is more edifying than a complete collection. To that is to be added the obscurity of a great many phrases and words used by him, and the source—Vedântic metaphysics—remote from popular speech, from which he draws a large part of his similes. These two elements have made him in regard to the greater part of his compositions a poet for the select few. His verses are devoid of wit. You feel they are the product of the pen of a man, severe and austere, who is moved to indignation at the immorality, hypocrisy, and vice prevalent around him. He resembles Juvenal in the power of his epigram and in the force of his attacks on contemporary superstition and vice. Society in Gujarat has not changed greatly since his time, and some of his descriptions are as true to-day as they were when written.

As examples of his verses, satirical and ordinary, the following should suffice.

After finding out the real nature of the Mahârâj at Jeypur, whose name was Gokulanâth, he and satire. said, "I made Gokulanâth my guru

(preceptor) which was like putting reins on an old bullock (who eats your food but does not answer to the goad). He (the guru) would take away your wealth but not the perturbation—uneasiness—of your mind. What good can such a guru do ?”*

“He has with great zest proclaimed himself a guru, (but) how can a man with a stone round his neck, float ?”† He means to say that if the teacher himself has the stone of ignorance round his neck how can he swim, much less make others swim?

He did not believe in the spiritual benefits of pilgrimages. He said, “at the feet of Pilgrimage. Harijan (a pious man, one who has known God) were a million places of pilgrimage.”‡

He had reached the highest stage that a Vedântin aspires to. He had known the Unity of Jiva and Íswara, he had reached the final beatitude, and become one with the Brahma. He said, “every one is undergoing penance (तप) to get to Hari, but Akhâ was moving in Hari (i. e., in Hari he lived, moved and had his being) by himself without the help or mediation of penances.”§ Aiso, “you

His union with
Brahma.

* गुरु कीधा में गोकुलनाथ, घरडा बळदने घाली नाथ,

धन हरे धोको नव हरे, ए गुरु कल्याण शुं करे?

† गुरु थई बेठो होसे करी, कंठे पहाण शके केम तरी?

‡ तीर्थ कोटी हरीजनने चरण.

§ हरि पामवा सौ तप करे, अक्षो हरिमां मेळे फरे.

become your own guru, there is none other to whom to pray. Leaving off working at externals, turn your devotion inside, i. e., inside your own heart.* (Know thyself)."

In his opinion Sanskrit, the language of the learned, had no magic in it. Prâkrit or even vernacular was equally good, and so he used the latter as the vehicle for the expression of his thoughts. His aim was to teach the masses, and open their eyes to the follies being practised round about them. If that was attained, then it was all right, and so he said, "Why do you stick to (this or that) language, O idiot? He who succeeds on the battlefield (irrespective of the weapons he uses) is a hero."†

In illustrating some of his theses, he takes very homely instances. A man who pays no heed to what is taught to him or what he has heard, he likens to a leaky leather bag going down a deep well.‡ A vainglorious man who happens to have a little sprinkling of knowledge is likened to a quarrelsome daughter-in-law who has become the mother of a son (this event, it need not be said, enhances her status greatly in a Hindu family).§ He is "like a fighting bull, grazing

* गुरु था तारो तुंज, नथी कोई बीजो भजना,
बाह्य सुरतने टाळ्य, बाळ्य अंतरमां सेवा.

† भाषानें शुं बळ्यो भूर, जे रणमां जीते ते धूर.

‡ ऊंडो कूवो ने फाटी बोख, शिखळ्युं सांभळ्युं सखळुं फोड.

§ ओळुं पात्र ने अदकुं मण्यो, बढकणी बहुए दिकरो जण्यो.

his fill in clover in the monsoon, or like a mad dog. Everyone is afraid of such a man, says Akhâ, because, forsooth, he is like a monkey drinking wine (which increases its mischievous tendency).*" "He heard the Kathâ (sacred reading) so long that he became deaf, still he did not know who Brahma was.†" "He (a fool) worships all stones as gods.‡

Akhâ has protested against his being called a poet.§

Dislike of being
called a poet.

He styles himself a philosopher, a knower (jnâni), but still his Chhappâs have placed him, much against his will, in

the rank of poets.

It is difficult to say whether Akhâ had studied that particular branch of literature called Ignorance of prosody.* छंद-शास्त्र (prosody). None of his poems are composed in any recognised metre. He tried to write in a popular strain ignoring the छंदs (classical metres). His Chhappâs are not the Chhappâs recognised by prosody but are another name for Chopâis, rounded off with six instead of four lines (cho-four, pâis-lines).

* मारकणो सांड ने चोमाखुं महात्सो, करडकणा कुतराने रुकना हात्सो;
मरकट ने वळी मदीरा पीए, अखा एथी सौ को बीहे.

† कथा सांभळी फूटया कान,

तोए न आव्युं ब्रह्मज्ञान;

‡ पथर तेडला पूजे देव.

§ ज्ञानीने कविमां न गणीष्ट,

किरण सूर्यनां कयम वरणीष्ट?

His pithy epigrams and terse phrases proved of great help to him in the line of work he had laid down for himself. His work was more of a destructive than constructive nature, and the careful student would note that with him, therefore, began a new epoch in Gujarati literature. He is the leader of that school of poetry which parted company with Bhakti, and which ceased to lay the foundation of its work on the worship of Krishṇa. We miss in him and in those who follow him that singleness of purpose which saw in the cow-herd of Brindāban, the Lord of the Universe, and which saw salvation merely in devotion (दासत्व) to Hari. Henceforth poetry became, so to speak, secular, and ceased to minister to religion. Akhâ revelled in philosophy, Premânand in delineation and description of human and physical nature, and Sâmal in story-telling. The verse literature of Gujarat thus made an entirely new and welcome departure, beginning with Akhâ.

The laurel crown is ungrudgingly placed on the brow of Premânand, who followed Akhâ. Premânand: his merit.

If any single individual has uplifted the language and literature of Gujarat from the mire of obscurity, if any one writer has rescued it from the stigma of its being a non-Sanskritic and therefore plebeian literature, fit for the barbarous only, if by a vow solemnly made and religiously kept, any single poet has brought it in a line with the much-renowned and over-much cultured literatures of Sanskrit and Prâkrit, it is Premânand. It

is said of him that he had taken a vow not to put on a turban, till he had purged Gujarati of the charge of inferiority, of having no literature worth the name compared to Sanskrit. He kept his vow, and by his own genius created one, which for its richness and variety even to-day stands unmatched.

Premânand, or as he calls himself Bhata Premânand (A. D. 1636-1734) was a Brahmin by caste and native of Baroda. His parents died when he was a child, leaving him in a state of poverty. For the gift of poetry, he too, like Narsinh Mehta before him, and like his illustrious successor Dayârâm, is said to have been indebted to divine agency. Till the age of fourteen or fifteen he was unlettered and uncultured, but he was fortunate in being employed as the attendant to a pious man who had come and settled in the neighbourhood of the Kâmanâth Mahâdev temple of Baroda. The day before the holy man left Baroda he told Premânand he was going away, and invited him to see him early in the morning before he left. Like the Persian poet Hafiz, who was called by the Prophet Khizar on the same errand, Premânand did not go to him in time and the saint left. Still by dint of running Premânand was able to catch him up. The saint thereupon blessed him for his services, and said "Go home, you will be able to compose poems in Prâkrit. If you had come earlier, I would have bestowed on you the power of composing poems in Sanskrit." Another tradition—and it is one which is

supported by the testimony of his distinguished pupil and son—Vallabh,—is that the boy Premânand happened to cultivate the acquaintance of a learned sannyâsi, Râmacharan Harihar by name, who had lodged in the temple of Kâmanâth at Baroda.* Râmcharan took him as his companion to different parts of India. Premânand was diligent and he acquired a vast amount of learning in the course of his wanderings. He mastered Sanskrit and Hindi. In spite of the vituperations of Akhâ, who himself set at naught the vogue of composing in Sanskrit and Hindi. Hindi was the recognised language of the cultured and the learned, and Premânand also at the outset fell a victim to that prevailing fashion. His first compositions were in Hindi. He showed them with great delight to his preceptor Râmacharan, who was a Gujarati by birth. The Swâmî said, “Are you not proud of your own mother-tongue? Why do you compose poems in Hindi? It is to be greatly regretted.” This touched him to the quick, and it was at this time that he took the vow not to put on his turban until he had enriched his mother-tongue.

In Gujarat there is an institution of Purân-reciters called नागरीजामट or माणभट. They are Brahmins, and their business is to recite before large audiences, with suitable comments and illustrations accompanied by music soul-

* See the lines of Vallabh beginning with

एवे मकी आव्या सिद्ध, पृथ्वीमां प्रसिद्ध पूरा,
नमी पुछ्यं तेमने में, भलो त्वारे भाबियो.

stirring epics like those of the Mahābhārat and the Rāmāyaṇ. The verses are mostly their own, and while singing them, they keep time by means of striking an iron ring, put on their little fingers, against a large, round, narrow-necked copper vessel called गणर or गण.

Purāṇ-reciters of
Gujarat.

Even at the present day the institution exists, though it is not flourishing as of yore. A clever reciter carries the audience with him by his manner of reproducing the incidents vividly before them. Any night, in the streets of Broach, Surat, Ahmedabad or Baroda, one can see the Bhat, now swaying his audience by means of his apt illustrations, and again exciting them to the very highest pitch of feeling, by himself sympathetically half rising from his seat, in the narration of a spirited dialogue, like that of Duryodhana and Bhīma or Karna and Arjuna, when they meet face to face. These Purāṇ reciters were a great power in the land before modern education and printing presses brought books to the homes of the people. A light or two, a couple of attendants to supplement the music of the reciter, and either cap the verse or bring up the chorus of the verse recited by him, and a platter to collect the coins as one hearer after another dropped in to bow to the Bhat, completed the paraphernalia of these itinerant story-tellers. If they were sweet-voiced and eloquent they attracted large audiences and earned much money. They were so instructive too, that even educated men did not disdain to attend such recitals; and those who

have listened to one of them mourn their gradual disappearance. This was the profession of Premānand's earnings from Purāṇ recitation. Premānand, and when he died at the ripe age of ninetyeight he left as the savings from his income, eight houses behind him, besides a considerable sum in cash. Once in a contest between himself and his contemporary Sāmal Bhat he distributed 100 gold mohurs to the Pandits who attended the meeting as their honorarium, दक्षिणा. He also spent a large amount in giving caste dinners.

He divided his time chiefly between Baroda, Surat and Nandarbâr, to which last place he went towards the end of his life. It is presumed that he was supported by the rulers of Nandarbâr, but of this no mention is made in his works.

His contemporary Sāmal was also a great story-teller and his rival as a poet. They engaged in literary contests, and at times descended to abusing each other, and though we do not find any detailed account of these contests either in the works of Premānand or Sāmal, it is not difficult to make out in places, unfavourable allusions by one to the other, or aspersions* cast against each other. Premānand's

* One of Premānand's methods was the selection of an incident from the Purāṇas or the Mahābhārata, and its elaboration and development in his own words. This procedure Sāmal disparaged, saying, "who will call him a poet who merely repeats what is said by another?"
कहां कवे ते शेनो कवि?

pupil and son has described them in great detail in his works. This bid for supremacy was one of the means of whetting the edge of Premánand's desire to add to and improve the literature of Gujarat. The very low estimate formed of Gujarati at the time in comparison with its sister vernaculars is rather humorously epitomised in the following hackneyed couplet.*

Low estimate of Gujarati in his time.

अबे तबेके सोळ हि आने, अठे कठेके बार;
इकडं तिकडं आठ ही आने, शुं शां पेसे चार.

Abé Tabé (Urdu or Hindustani for 'here and there') is worth sixteen annas in the rupee, and Athé Kathé (Mâr-wâdi for the same words) twelve. Ikdam Tikadam (Marâthi for the same) eight annas and Śun Śân, (Gujarâti equivalent for 'what') only four pice (one anna).

This characteristically low place assigned to Gujarati, Premánand could not brook, and not only by his own pen did he create a treasure-house of interesting and instructive literature, but he brought into existence a literary club of sympathetic spirits of both sexes, numbering about one hundred, pledged to carry forward the banner he had unfurled. Of these, fifty-two were actual workers in the field, twelve being women.* Out of them, six have left

Foundation of a mixed literary club.

* Vallabh has thus alluded to them

छे नव दास अने भई चारज, रत्न भलां द्रयशिष्य कहावे;
छे भव राश अने बई बारज, रत्न मळां कय विश्व कहावे;

a name and considerable poetry, viz., Virji, Haridās, Dwārkādās, Ratneśwar, Vallabh and Sundar. Two out of them Vallabh—Premānand's own son—and Virji were his favourites.

• We shall pass on to a consideration of the poet's works after alluding to one very notable instance of that affection for his mother-tongue which endured till his dying-day. One of his best poems, viz., the Daśama Skandha (Tenth Chapter of the Bhāgavat, containing the life-history of Krishna or rather of his childhood) was yet unfinished, and he felt his powers failing very rapidly. He thereupon summoned his four most advanced pupils, Vallabh, Ratneśwar, Virji and Sundar to him, and called upon each of them to compose a sample couplet bearing on the subject-matter of the Tenth Chapter. The couplets of the first three he felt to be much superior to that of Sundar, but each of them at the end of the couplet had described himself as a poet, as was the invariable practice of poetry-writers. Premānand himself had never taken this title for himself. He modestly called himself simple Bhat Premānand, and if any one addressed him as a poet, he felt offended. Sundar had deliberately omitted this appellation, and so the scales turned in his favour, and the dying behest of his illustrious master, to complete the poems was laid on him.

Premānand's love
for Gujarati,

छे विर पंज, जी गणिये ऋण, नंद चतरनुं वल्ल सुहावे;
छे बीर वल्लभ, शे भणिये गण? एकज प्रेमनुं नाम पुहावे.

The scheme of development laid down by Premānand was that he himself was to write poetry like or on the model of Sanskrit and Prakrit, his son Vallabh, Hindi; Ratneśwar, Marāthi; Virji Urdu and Persian; while Sundar was to compose Sanskrit Purāṇic tales.

The modern fashion is to divide poetry into subjective and objective. Premānand's handiwork would fall under the second category.

His poetry objective. His poetical works alone come to nearly thirty in number.*

* 1. स्वर्गनिसरणी (His first poem); 2. लक्ष्मणाहरण (A. D. 1664); 3. ओखाहरण (A. D. 1667); 4. चन्द्रहासाख्यान (A. D. 1671); 5. अभिमन्यु आख्यान (A. D. 1671); 6. मदालसाख्यान (A. D. 1672); 7. ऋष्यशृंगाख्यान (A. D. 1673); 8. हुडी (A. D. 1674); 9. हारमाळा (A. D. 1678); 10. द्रौपदीस्वयंवर (A. D. 1680); 11. मांधाताख्यान (A. D. 1681); 12. श्राद्ध (A. D. 1681); 13. सुदामाचरित्र (A. D. 1682); 14. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (A. D. 1682); 15. मामेर (A. D. 1683); 16. सुधन्वाख्यान (A. D. 1684); 17. रणयज्ञ (A. D. 1685); 18. नळाख्यान (A. D. 1685); 19. द्रौपदीहरण (A. D. 1689); 20. हरिश्चन्द्राख्यान (A. D. 1692); 21. देवीचरित्र (A. D. 1696); 22. सुभद्राहरण (A. D. 1702); 23. मार्कंडेय पुराण (A. D. 1692-1709); 24. अष्टावक्राख्यान (A. D. 1710); 25. दाणलीला; 26. वामनचरित्र; 27. विवेकवर्णहार; 28. भ्रमरपंचाशी; 29. सप्तमस्कंध or प्रह्लादाख्यान; 30. रुक्मिणीहरण; 31. दशमस्कंध; 32. सामळशाहनी विवाह; 33. द्वादशमास; To these some add

† Premānand was dissatisfied with लक्ष्मणाहरण. He had taken on a wager to compose in one day, a work, which would take only 2½ ghadis to peruse. He won the bet, but being composed in a hurry, the various रस and अलंकार were not to his taste.

* Devicharitra was composed in answer to a challenge, that there was no merit in reproducing the Markandeya Purāṇ, which was easy enough. Devicharitra was comparatively

The poems are of two kinds: domestic subjects and semi-religious or Purāṇic subjects. He had to choose the former because of his being twitted by Sāmal, that he was no poet who repeated what was already recited in books i. e., the Purāṇas and other religious treatises. He, therefore, chose some of the most outstanding incidents in the life of Narsinh Mehta, the great devotee of Kṛishṇa, and by the magic of his genius treated them in such an intensely popular vein, that to this day not a single individual, man or woman, who claims to be a native of Gujarat, will be

found unacquainted with either one or other of his poems on those subjects. Subject-matter of poems: their popularity.

The delineation of the characters, the descriptions of the various situations, and the simple language, coupled with the smooth run of the verses, appeal to all, and from year's end to year's end itinerant beggars and charity-seeking Brahmmins contribute and testify to his popularity by singing them in street after street of the towns and villages of Gujarat.

Two auspicious occasions in the lives of Narsinh

- * (1) नासिकेतोपाख्यान. (2) बभ्रुवाहनाख्यान. (3) ब्रजवेल. (4) बांगवाख्यान. (5) सुरेखाहरण. (6) लवकुशाख्यान. (7) ज्ञानगीता. (8) वल्लभ-झण्डो. (9) रेवाख्यान. (10) भीष्मचरित्र. (11) कर्णचरित्राख्यान. (12) जय-देवाख्यान. (13) रामायण. (14) महाभारत. (15) अश्वमेध. (16) रघुवंश. (17) हरिवंश. (18) कपिलगीता. (19) नरकासुराख्यान. (20) पांडवोनी भांजगड. (21) द्रौपदीवल्लहरण.†

difficult. Premānand, therefore wrote it to show that he was at home in that branch of the Purāṇas too. † This list is kindly arranged by Mr. Natvarlal Itcharam Desai, B. A.

Poems connected with
Narsinh Mehta.

Mehta's two children furnish the subject matter of his poems: **સામલ્દાસનો વિવાહ** and **કુંવરબાઈનું મામેરું**. These were the marriage of his son Sâmalaldâs and the day when it was announced to him that his daughter Kunvarbâi was to become a mother—a very great event in the life of a Hindu woman—and in consequence thereof in order to show his pleasure at the event he was called upon to make presents to all her relatives-in-law. The incident of his having drawn a Hundi (bill of exchange) on his Master Krishṇa at Dwârka and the performance of his deceased father's Śrâddha (funeral obsequies) are told in verse. Narsinh Mehta's poverty is proverbial, and so is the richness of his faith in his Lord-Krishṇa. The ill-feeling of his relatives and their readiness to pour ridicule on him, when he was found on account of his poverty, in difficulties in wordly matters, as for example in the case of the marriage of his son-as well as the readiness with which Krishṇa delivered him from his troubles, form the themes of his poems. The picture he has drawn of the manners and customs of those times (we have not changed at all since then, and it is as true to-day as it was then) is so vivid, the quiet humour pervading his narration when e. g., a sister-in-law or a mother-in-law asserts her authority over the daughter-in-law, the extremely amusing way in which the ladies of the caste bantered Narsinh Mehta and his strange party of Sadhus, who, contrary to all practice,

accompany him on such auspicious though worldly occasions, the ramshackle house of the poor devotee, and his still more ramshackle conveyance, yoked to old and worn out bullocks in which he drives from Junagadh to his daughter's husband's place, the genius displayed in all these is wonderful. No translation into English of these verses can convey any idea of the original. An intimate knowledge of the manners and customs of the natives of Gujarat is necessary to appreciate these poems and no outsider would, therefore, be able, even if he understood the language, to grasp the full beauty of the composition and its accuracy. A few extracts are, however, given below.

In Kunvarbâi's Mâmerun, he thus describes the abject poverty of her father, Narsinh Mehta.

"After his marriage, Mehta lived with his wife. In his home he would worship Dâmodar, with a necklace, and sectarial marks and seal-impressions on his fore-head and body. His associates were Sâdhus, Vaishṇavas and ash-besmeared ascetics, and in his house would be heard the blowing of conches, the beating of kartâls and the ringing of bells. In the open space in the middle of the house, there were clusters of the Tulsi plant (sacred to Vishṇu) and night and day there was singing.

Description of
Narsinh Mehta's
house,

No tilling of the soil, no business, no commerce were carried on. The devotee of Hari was absorbed in the contemplation of God. Any Vaishṇav who came to his house was welcome to dinner,

and Mehta passed his days in singing the praises of God. The Lord of the Universe supplied the food, Mehta had an abiding faith in Him.”*

The conveyance in which Mehta and his party travelled is thus described.

“The vehicle was old and the yoke was crooked. The સાંગી had its sticks broken. The તડાવા and the પંજળી—the so-called parts of the vehicle which prevent the wheels from slipping off the axle-tree—belonged to different individuals.

The pair of bullocks were borrowed. * * * * A sack was tied to the rear of the vehicle, in it was a number of musical instruments. There was a bag full of holy white clay (ગોપીચંદન) and the sacred Tulsi wood. How could the bullocks who were wanting in physical strength go forward? The party of Vaishnavas (consequently) pushed the vehicle from behind. They shouted and stimulated the beasts to move on when the road was uphill and (when they had climbed up) cried out, ‘Victory, Victory to the lord of Vaikuntha.’ When

* મહેતે માંજ્યો ગૃહસ્થાશ્રમ, પતિવ્રતા ઘેર નારી પરમ,
દામોદરની સેવા કરે, માઢા તિલક ને મુદ્રા ધરે;
સાધુ વેરાગી વૈષ્ણવ સંગ, શંખ તાઢ ને વાગે વંગ,
ચોક માંહી તુઢસીનાં વન, અહર્નિશ થાયે કીર્તન;
નહિ ઁતી ઉચ્ચમ વેપાર, હરિ ભગત મહેતો તદાકાર,
જે અઘિ તે વૈષ્ણવ જમે, ગુણ ગાઈને દહાઢા નિર્ગમે;
વિશ્વંભર પૂરું પઢિ અન્ન, વિશ્વાસ ઘણો મહેતાને મન.

one bullock refused to move, out of sheer exhaustion, and sat down, the other dragged (the vehicle) on. The one that had fallen down was made to get up by twisting his tail; a thousand (such) strange scenes occurred. The joints of the vehicle had parted company. The सांगी made a grating sound and the wheels creaked dreadfully. They got into (the vehicle) and alighted (from it) and again got into it with the names of Râma and Krishṇa on their lips. (Thus) Narsinh Mehta came up (at last) at noon and the whole village of Unâ turned out to have a look at the spectacle.”*

In the “Hundi” the description of Śrī Krishṇa turning†

* जूनी व्हेल ने धूसरी वांकी, सांगी सोटा सांगी जी,
कोना तळावा ने कोनी पिंजणियो, बळद आप्या बे मागी जी.

* * * * *

व्हेलनी पूठे कोथळो बांध्यो, मांही भर्या वाजित्री जी,
गांठडी एक गोपीचंदननी, तुळसी काष्ठ पवित्री जी.
बळहीणा बळदो शुं हीडे, ठेले वेण्णव साथ जी,
सोर पाडे ने ढाळ चढावे, जे जे वैकुंठनाथ जी.
एक बळद गळियो थई बेसे, आखलो ताणी जाय जी,
पड्याने पुंछ ग्रही उठाडे, कौतुक कोटी थाय जी.
साले साल जूजवां दीसे, रथ तणां बहु वक्र जी,
सांगीनो बहु शब्दज ऊठे, चूचवे छे बहु चक्र जी.
चढे बेसे ने वळी ऊतरे, ले रामकृष्णलुं नाम जी
मध्याहे महेताजी आव्या, जोवा मळ्युं उना गाम जी.

† वेश पुरो आप्यो मारे व्हाले रे,
नाथ चौटानी चाले चाले रे;

up in the bazar at Dwárkâ, in the guise of a Bania shroff to take up and honbur the Hundi drawn on him by Narsinh Mehtâ, is so lifelike and characteristic of persons of that community in every little detail, that he who reads it, at once recognises on it the stamp of the genus Bania. The simpler of the Bania and the stutter in his speech, his badly folded turban and bedecked body rise up before the reader as a living image.

Some of his poems have made such a deep impression on the people of Gujarat, that they are sung both in public and private, all through the year. Some people make it a point to read Sudâmâ Charitra every Saturday, and the Mâmerun or Hundi every Sunday. The former is always requisitioned when Gujarati women are busy with preparations for the observance of the first pregnancy ceremony of a relative. In the month of Chaitra sounds of the

Periodical recitation
of his poems.

છે અવળા આંટાની પાઘડી રે,
ઘાલાજીને કેમ બાંધતાં આવડી રે.
દીસે વાળીઓ મીને વાન રે,
એક લેખણ યોસી છે કાન રે.
ત્રિકમજી વણિકની તોલે રે,
નાથ ઉતાવળું ને બોબડું બોલે રે.

* * * * *

ઓઢવને યાંધે કોથળી રે,
તે તો પારસી બોલે તોતડી રે.

recitations of his Okhâ Haraṇ fall on the ear, in almost every town and village if not in every home, and the Śrāddha is sung at every monthly ritual bearing that name. In the monsoon, villagers are very fond of hearing his Daśama Skandha read, in addition to the Nalākhyān and the Okhâ Haraṇ.

Premānand was a master of the रसशास्त्र, poetic aesthetics and अलंकारशास्त्र, poetics as understood in Sanskrit, and in his works, we everywhere find illustrations of all the nine रसs. It is said that the Okhâ Haraṇ was written with the purpose of illustrating the शृंगाररस (the sentiment of love), the Raṇayajna the वीररस (the sentiment of heroism), the Māmeruṇ the हास्यरस (comic sentiment) and the Sudāmā Charitra the शान्तरस (the sentiment of quietism). But truly speaking, Premānand is the master of all the रस's and in one and the same poem, we come across, numerous illustrations,—all of them the best of their kind—of a number of them. Who can say that in the Okhâ Haraṇ, the description of the battle between Okhâ's husband, and her father's army falls in any way short of similar descriptions in the Abhimanyu Ākhyān or Sudhanvākhyān, or that the tragic scenes in the Nalākhyān are inferior to such scenes in the Daśama Skandha? Can it be said that the quiet humour and latent sarcasm, which are the prevailing features of the scene where Nāgar ladies banter the wife of Narsinh Mehta for the lateness of the Śrāddha dinner, are

His mastery over
poetic aesthetics
and poetics.

a whit worse than those disclosed in a parallel scene in the Mâmerun where these very gentle souls are anxiously scanning the situation, when Narsinh Mehta is called upon to distribute presents to them? It is true, that the *motif*, the leading purpose of writing a particular poem is the illustration of a particular *ras*, because the subject-matter of the poem, exemplifies or typifies it. The Okhâ Haran is meant to exemplify the love of a young girl for her swain, the Sudâmâ Charitra, the affection of one friend for another, but it must be said that Premânand has handled all of them in one and the same poem with the same conspicuous ability.

It would occupy too much space to notice each poem of Premânand's even in the most cursory manner. It must suffice to give an outline of some of his most celebrated works.

The Daśama Skandh (Tenth Chapter of the Bhāgavat) the Nalākhyân, the Okhâ Haran, the Raṇayajna and the Sudamâ Charitra, are among them, though the Vâman Kathâ and Sudhanvâ-khyân are also equally worthy of our study.

The Daśama Skandh is taken up entirely with the childhood and boyhood of Kṛishṇa. The various incidents in his life, the different allegorical situations in it, his love for and his mischief with the Gopis, his affection for the cows, his life at Gokul and Brindâban, his killing his uncle Kansa and

liberating his real father and mother, his final separation from his adoptive parents, Nanda and Jasodâ, these have furnished Premânand with themes and his interesting genius has made his creations realities to the people of Gujarat. Krishna had gone down into the Jumna to recover a ball which accidentally fell into the waters while playing hockey with his fellow cow-herd-boys. The river was inhabited by a fierce serpent-demon called Kâliya-Nâga, the black serpent, so fierce that the intensity of his black coloured poison had made even the waters of the river dark. On Jasodâ being informed of this untoward event, she burst into a long and feeling lament, and Premânand's description of it is a lyric of unique beauty. The pathos is such, that few readers can resist shedding tears at the bitterness of the mother's grief disclosed in it. The following is but a feeble version.

“With rings in his ears, and flute in his mouth, he returned home (from the forests) in the evening. He would point at his stomach with his finger to say that he was hungry, addressing me as mother. His scarf was yellow and he would tuck his Dhotar up between his legs and ask for the churning rope, knowing that I, his old mother was exhausted. Now that he is gone who will help me in churning milk? He was the lord of the soul, the lord of the Gopis, how will they now live without him? How will his little companions fare? The cows will die silently sorrowing. Why

Jasodâ's lament.

has my darling turned his face from me ? What can have enticed him ?*

The passages describing Krishna's determination to leave Gokul for Mathura for ever, and how on the news being communicated to Nanda and his wife Jasodâ that the child whom they had so lovingly brought up was not really their own, but the son of Vasudev and Devaki, they refuse to believe it and decline to allow Krishna to live on at Mathura, are of great excellence, very pathetic, and touching by their very simplicity. Jasodâ refuses to believe that her son could be the Lord of the Universe. She says "I am the mother of my child Krishna, and shall weep and weep, and weep for him and shall never believe that my child is God." The situation pictured is so human, that even a rustic realizes it, the moment it is described.

The Nalâkhyân is another master-piece of Premânand. King Nala was introduced to his future wife Damayantî by a royal swan. At the assemblage of her wooers (स्वयंवर) in spite of the

* काने कुंडळ मुखमां मोरली, सांजे गोकुळ आवे,
भूख्यो छुं कही पेट देखाडे, मा कही मने बोलवे. रे सामळीआ.
पीत पीछोडी काळ कळे, मुज कने नेतरं मांगे,
हुं घरडी माने थाकी जाणी, कोण वलोववा लागे. रे सामळीआ.
तुं प्राणेश्वर, तुं गोपेश्वर, गोपी देह केम धरशे ?
बाळ सखानी कोण वले ? आ गायो हीसी हीसी मरशे. रे सामळीआ.
मारं माणेकडुं रीसाव्युं, रे सामळीआ,
तारा मनमां आ शुं आव्युं ? रे सामळीआ.

gods being desirous of her hand, she chose Nala, and that set one of them, Kali, the presiding genius of this evil age, against him, especially as he was a candidate for her hand, but arrived too late. Kali induced him to gamble. He lost his kingdom in the game, and went out to the forests with Damayanti: there through the wiles of Kali, he deserted her. Alone and helpless she wandered, till after various vicissitudes she reached her father's palace. Nala too in the meanwhile had been passing through great ordeals. He was stung by a cobra and had lost his original form, becoming much distorted and very ugly. All the same, Damayanti was able to find out where he was, and under pretence of holding another (स्वयंवर) gathering of those who would seek her hand, she managed to get him back to her father's. On recognising each other, they ask mutual forgiveness, and the married life, commenced in such an inauspicious manner leads eventually to great happiness. Some of the passages of this poem have become famous in Gujarati literature. The description of the charms of Damayanti, when she prepares for the great gathering at which she was to choose her husband is simply inimitable. Then the bitterness of her grief when she comes to realise that her husband had deserted her in the dead of night, for no apparent fault of hers, which finds expression in the magnificent lines beginning with "The daughter of the King of Vidarbha wandered about in the forest bewildered and perplexed in the dark night,"*

* वैदर्भी वनमां वलवले, अंधारी रात,

wherein she interrogates each tree, shrub, beast and bird of the forest, if it has seen her husband, is a capital instance of how Premânand was able to lay bare the most delicate as well as the most sorrowful feelings of the human heart, in a striking way. The mother, the father, the husband and the wife, their joys and sorrows, are painted on the canvas of this poem by a master hand. This much one can say, without fear of contradiction.

The Okhâ Haraṇ is a much simpler poem, where there is neither complexity of situation nor of sentiments. Okhâ is the daughter of a powerful King blessed with a thousand hands, and protected against death by the blessings of Śiva, save it be from the hands of his son-in-law. Bâṇâsur, therefore, kept his daughter confined in a solitary tower, where access was prohibited to any one else excepting a female companion called Chitrālehâ who was an incarnation of Destiny. Okhâ happened, as she grew up, to see in a dream her future Lord who was the grandson of Krishṇa. She importuned Chitrālehâ to bring him to her and she did so by means of her magical power. The lover and his beloved were detected and a fight ensued in which Bâṇâsur was defeated. Then bowing to the inevitable, he bestowed the hand of his daughter on the person of her choice, and thus everyone was reconciled. The flights of fancy indulged in by the poet in this poetic episode, are so many and so affecting that now one passage and now another out of it, is found on the tongue of almost every woman in Gujarat. Parents

teach it to their children, the educated to the uneducated, and even those who cannot read but know it by heart teach it to their companions. For instance, the lines beginning with "Okhâ says, listen to me, my friend, Bring me my husband as soon as you can,"* can any day be heard from the lips of a Hindu lady, who with the singing of these beautiful lines whiles away the tedium of work.

The late Mr. Tripathi says "the poet's works are full of episodes in which the gentler sex exerts her benign, softening and even pious influence over the heart of man, and he hedges her with a halo of divinity which makes rough man not only love, but respect her. One of his poems is entitled the Battle-Sacrifice (रणयज्ञ), and its subject is the war against Râvaṇ, the Paris of the Indian Iliad. This Paris has kept his Helen, Sîtâ, in a solitary garden for years, and he daily visits her on the mission of love, but always returns baffled by his own heart. And why? He is a ferocious monarch and a voluptuous lover. He might court Sîtâ or lay violent hands upon her honour. What makes him desist? The husband of Sîtâ is at the gates of his capital with a powerful army. Râvaṇ ought either to restore Sîtâ to him or to force his Helen to yield to his wishes. He can do neither and is in a quandary. His haughty spirit disdains to yield in humiliation to an enemy. On

* ओखा कहे सुण साहेली, लाब्य नाथने वहेली वहेली.

the other hand, he can do nothing with Sîtâ. Always calling on Sîtâ with what the great English poet would call "Tarquin's ravishing strides," he is baffled in her presence by his own feeling that she resembles his mother, and he always returns to his post as did Lady Macbeth saying of King Duncan, "Had he not resembled my father as he slept I had done it." Some Orientalists have sat in criticism upon Vâlmîki, the author of the Râmâyana, and found fault with the high improbability of this part of human nature in Râvana. The Gujarat poet supplies as above no weak reply to the critics. Râvana, moreover, has his own wife whom he loves and respects, and though he has kicked and driven away his brother for telling him that he has wronged Râma, and must beg his pardon and restore Sîtâ, Râvana cannot treat his wife in the same way, when it is she who advises to the same effect, and accompanies her advice with a virtuous sermon. "Mad woman," replies the Lord of Lankâ to her, 'dost thou think I am mad? I was the first to philosophise on this matter: see why I have done this. I have tasted the highest sweetness of worldly blessings, triumph in wars, and all that royalty and triumphs can shower on a king. Now I am tired of them and my aspirations turn another way. I no longer like this pomp and glory. My heart is set upon a glorious end of my career—glorious death on the battlefield at the hands of the Divine Râma.' He longs, in fact for a glorious death to crown a glorious life. When all was lost Râvana played one of his trump cards by send-

ing his brother Kumbhakarna against Râma. This extremely virile giant was blessed with the sleep of Rip Van Winkle. When once asleep he used to snore on for months together, and it was a problem how to wake him. Râvaṇ tried various devices, ran horses over his body, had big kettle drums and tambourines beaten aloud at his ears, and serpents sent through his nostrils. But all in vain. Then his wife came to the rescue and said that he was a worshipper of Śiva and only music and dancing would wake him. Râvaṇ did so and was successful. He was much wroth at his sleep being interrupted, and asked Râvaṇ the cause of his being wakened up prematurely. Râvaṇ told him the reason and he was greatly exasperated at hearing of his misconduct. Rubbing his hands, and shaking his head, Kumbhakarna exclaimed, "You are mad, my brother. You have ruined yourself by displeasing the Lord of the Universe. You have to fight with a powerful person. Brother, why did you make Raghunâth (Râma) angry? While lifting the Tryambak (bow at the स्वयंवर of Sîtâ) you got your twenty arms crushed (underneath it), Râghav set you free and still, O Lord of Lankâ, you have proved an ingrate. He it is who bridged the waters of the ocean, he it is who caused stones to float like flowers, he it is who pierced the clouds without difficulty. Still, my brother, you have not learnt reason. You have got millions of women in your house, whom the gods desire to look at. Why, then, have you brought Sîtâ? It seems your bad habits have not left you although you have

become old. You have conquered the whole world, but have not yet conquered lust (passion) and anger. Your dark hair has turned gray, still your mind has remained dark. Like a night without a moon, like a house without light, does our city of Lanká appear (deserted) without our brother Vibhishana (who has gone over to Râma as you did not listen to his advice). The wife of another is like a flame of fire, a snake, a poisonous creeper. She will take the lives of yourself and your family, so you had better go and bow down your head before Râma's feet. I am not afraid of death, but you better take warning in time. If you do not follow my advice, you will go to the door of Yama (death) with your family. If you wanted only to keep her separate in a garden, why did you bring Jânakî here? If you cannot conquer Sitâ, how will you conquer Râma? Râvaṇ then said to him, 'O Kumbhakarna, hear this tale of woe. Whenever I look at Sati (chaste) Sitâ, I think as if I see our mother. If I were to take my heart away from Sitâ, it will burn with my dead body (I shall die). How can I now bend my knee to my foe Râma? It will blacken my face, [i. e., I would die of shame].'' Râvaṇ failed to take the advice of Kumbhakarna, and fierce fighting ensued wherein both sides having performed prodigies of valour, he lost the battle and was killed.*

* कर घसी कुंभकर्ण बोल्यो, धुणी पोताहुं शीश,

घर घालुं भाई घेलडा, तैं दुभव्या श्रीजगदीश, वीरा.

बकीआ साथे बाय, वीरा, कां दुभ्या श्रीरघुनाथ, वीरा?

One of the most admirable traits in the character of Krishna and the happiest episode of his Story of Sudāmā. life was the right hand of fellowship and help which he extended to his school friend Sudāmā. After passing their early schooldays at the Āśrama (house) of Sandīpana Rishi, where Sudāmā acted as head

त्रंबक लेतां ताहरा रे, चंपाणा बीश हाथ,
काढी मूक्यो तने राघवजीए, थयो कृतघ्नी लंकानाथ, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

सायर जळ जेणे बांधीयुं रे, सल्या तारी पुष्प समान,
मेघाडंबर सहेजे छेर्दियुं, तोय तुंने न आवी सान, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

लक्ष घरणी घेर ताहरे, जेनां दर्शन इच्छे देव,
तो सीताने शुं लावीओरे, थयो वृद्ध न गई कुटेव, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

जगत जीती तें जेर कीधुं, पण न जीत्या क्रोध ने काम,
शाम केश उज्जळ थया रे, तोये मन रहुं तारुं शाम, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

चन्द्र विना जेवी जामनी रे, दीप विना जेम धाम,
त्यम विभीषण बांधव विना, दिसे उज्जड लंका गाम, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

परनारी जेवी पावक ज्वाळा, सापण, विखनी वेल,
जीव लेशे तारो कुटुंब साथे, जई राम चरण शीश मेल, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

हुं मर्णथकी बीहीतो नथी, पण तुं वेळासर चेत,
नहि माने शीख माहरी, जाशे जमपुर स्वजन समेत, वीरा,

बळीआ० कां दुभ्या०

monitor and Krishṇa and his brother Balarām were pupils, Sudāmā started life as a poor and humble Brahmin, and became the father of ten children, the whole family living in utter poverty and misery. On the other hand, Krishṇa became the ruler of Dwârkâ. Sudāmā's principles were very high and philosophic. He, though a Brahmin stricken with abject poverty, never *begged*. A time came when he and his wife and children had to go hungry for two days and the very clever and worldly wife of Sudāmā, who till then had by various shifts and means been carrying on her household, lost patience and called upon Sudāmā to go and see his rich friend: he would surely find out the reason of his coming and help him. To this request Sudāmā gave a flat denial. He said, even going there in the garb of humility was tantamount to begging, and he would never beg. Then ensues a fine discussion between husband and wife, the latter ridiculing a philosophy which takes no account of food, family and

જો વાઢીમાં બેસાડી જાનકી, તો લેઈ આવ્યો કોણ કામ,
તુંથી સીતા જીતાતી નથી, તો કેમ જીતાશે રામ? વીરા,

બઢીઆં કાં દુઘ્યાં.

રાવણ કહે કુંભકર્ણને રે, સાંભળ દુઃખની વાત,
જ્યારે દેહું સતી જાનકી, જાણે હોય આપણી માત, વીરા,

બઢીઆં કાં દુઘ્યાં.

જો ત્યાગ કરું ચિત્ત સીતાથી, તો તે બઢશે શબને સંગ,
હવે કેમ નમું રિપુ રામને, મુઠ્ઠા લાગે કાઢો રંગ, વીરા,

બઢીઆં કાં દુઘ્યાં.

children; and the former, by various arguments, trying to impose contentment and patience on her. The mother very characteristically speaks out in her. With tears in her eyes, she says, "O Chief of Rishis, my mind has become dull, I beseech you. I do not like this philosophy (lit., knowledge) of yours. O Chief of Rishis, the children are weeping, get us food, I beseech you. Even the great Yogis and Bhaktas (devotees) cannot do without food. O, Chief of Rishis, without food you cannot think of offering prayers. The whole world lives on food."* Her practical philosophy at last prevailed and Sudāmā went to Krishṇa, with a little rice as a present to his friend's children. This measure of rice has now passed into a proverb in Gujarati, to typify a humble but affectionate tribute from a poor to his rich friend. Krishṇa's reception of him far exceeded his expectations and the rice which he had taken with him was heartily eaten by Krishṇa and his family. Krishṇa divined the purpose for which he had come. Before Sudāmā dared to open his lips, Krishṇa's will had worked a

* આંખ ભરી અબઝા કહે, ઋષિરાયજી રે,
મારું જડ થયું છે મન, લાગું પાયજી રે.
એતો જ્ઞાન મને ગમતું નથી, ઋષિરાયજી રે,
રુઝે બાઝક લાવો અન્ન, લાગું પાયજી રે.
અન્ન વિના ચાલે નહિ, ઋષિરાયજી રે,
મોટા જોગેશ્વર હરિભક્ત, લાગું પાયજી રે.
અન્નવિના ભજન સૂઝે નહિ, ઋષિરાયજી રે,
જીવે અન્ને આખું જગત, લાગું પાયજી રે.

miraculous transformation in the home of his penurious friend. His hovel had become a palace, his shrunken and starved wife became a woman of perfect beauty, full of accomplishments (Padminî), and his small-pox pitted children looked like cherubs. So that Sudāmā when he returned apparently empty-handed and disappointed—for Krishṇa gave him no presents in return for his measure of rice—cursing his wife for having made him break his vow, little dreamt of what had happened at home in his absence. He could not recognise his home, he could not make out his wife who came out to greet him, as he was slinking away with excuses, thinking he had made a mistake and was in the neighbourhood of the house of some opulent person. Mutual explanations soon made him aware of the change wrought in his circumstances, and he felt the faith in his friend justified.

Narsinh Mehtā also has written a poem on this subject but his treatment of it is very different. Narasinh's verses are a simple matter-of-fact narrative of the movements of a devotee, while Premānand has vitalised them all, and painted an animated picture in which both devotion and humour play an equal part. His verses show life-like movements of a human being living in the midst of the world and its limitations. This actuality is lacking in Narsinh.

A fault has been found with Premānand's poems, that they are not written in ઉંદસ but merely in દેશી (parti-

* cular forms of composition, not bound by the classical rules of Prosody). It is true he has not chosen the former mode of versification for a large bulk of his compositions, but it would be wrong, therefrom, to conclude that such an erudite scholar of Sanskrit was ignorant of the science of Prosody. We find in many places his poems interspersed with छंदs, and द्रौपदीहरण which is attributed to him is largely composed in the regular recognised छंदs.

His descriptions of men and women are replete with अलंकारs. They are studded with similes and metaphors. In fact, at times he loses control over himself under the inspiration of his subject, and goes on piling metaphor on metaphor and simile on simile, till the reader, out of sheer exhaustion in following and analysing them, stands aghast. Fastidious critics have, therefore, found a flaw in his otherwise perfect poetry. They say, a style simple and homely, such as is employed by him, cannot stand the strain of difficult subjects. In the treatment of such it loses its simplicity.*

Premânand's poems have a sort of autobiographical interest also. Almost all of them give the year, day of the week, month and date of their composition, together with

* The series of metaphors and similes, in the description of Damayanti's beauty and charms put into the mouth of the swan before King Nala, beginning with वेल जाणे हेमनी, अवेव फुले फुली is stupendous, and makes one pause for breath at every two or three lines.

the place where they were composed: Surat, Baroda or Nandardarbar. They also give the number of lines and verses in each. In many of them he gives the purpose too, with which they were written. For instance, he wrote *Devī Charitra* to show to his detractors, who ridiculed him as a mere versifier of simple Puraṇic subjects, that he was equally at home in the rather foreign subject of Śakti worship. It shows how he took up the challenge and produced a work which handles goddess-worship—the worship of nature in its feminine aspect—in as popular a manner as his other works. To persons so inclined, the dates of his works would greatly help in tracing the development and evolution of his genius, though, to an ordinary reader, there does not seem to be much or even any difference between his first and last productions.

The Editors of the *Prāchīn Kāvya Mālā* (Reprints of Old Poetical Literature), Rao Bahadur Premānand's plays, Hurgovandas D. Kāntāvālā and the late Nāthāsanker P. Śāstri, declare that Premānand wrote eleven plays, and that they have been able to find only three of them.

1. Roś Darśikā Satyabhāmā Ākhyān.
2. Pāñchālī Prasanna Ākhyān.
3. Tapatyākhyān.

As their very names betray, they (except the last) are concerned with popular subjects in connection with Kṛi-

shñā and the Pāṇdavas. Their language strikes one as very modern and up-to-date, and the use of such phrases as "killing two birds with one stone," together with certain phases of the style, have led and controversy about many to suspect that they could not their authorship. have been written by Premānand. In fact, a miniature Bacon-Shakespeare controversy has been raging for several years past between those who maintain that they were written by Premānand and those who maintain that they are a later production. The latter are headed by that well-known Gujarati scholar, Narsinhrao Bholānāth Divatiā, B. A., who has written a number of papers on the subject, and who, because of the inexplicable silence of those who are in a position to prove by means of the manuscripts which they allege to have found and published, and the furnishing of other convincing data about the genuineness of their finds, seems to hold the field to himself. So far, he has not been effectively answered, nor in spite of a prize of Rs. 500 offered by the Editor of the weekly paper *Gujarāṭi*, has any one come forward to produce any old or original manuscript or copy of the plays.*

The pride and the hope of Premānand, however, in his mother-tongue, can all the same be summed up in a pas-

* Attempts have, however, been recently made, to show that most of the phrases and idioms which are alleged to be only modern, are as well found in other productions which are universally acknowledged to be Premānand's.

sage of great effectiveness, from the play of Satyabhāmā.*
 “May the Gujarati language have an exuberance of the
 delightful વ્યંગ† or significations of words
 Premānand’s hope for his mother-tongue. by implication—with all their divisions
 and subdivisions. May every word of
 it be full of elegance (charming) and expressive of
 the various sentiments. May it be figurative or embellished
 like a woman adorned with ornaments on her feet. May it
 excel all its sister languages. May it attain to the high posi-
 tion assigned to classical Sanskrit. (In short) May God
 realize our hope to see it rise superior to all its sisters.”

Sāmal Bhat, the rival and contemporary of Premā-
 nand‡ was born somewhere before A. D.
 Sāmal Bhat, 1640 and died after 1730. He was a
 Shrigod Mālvi Brāhmin by caste, and an inhabitant of

* સાંગોપાંગ સુરંગ વ્યંગ્ય અતિથે, ધારો ગિરા ગુર્જરી,
 પાદેપાદ રસાઢ ભૂષણવતી, થાઓ સખી ડૂપરી.
 જે ગિર્વાણ ગિરા ગણાય ગણતાં, તે સ્થાન એ લ્યો વરી,
 થાયે શ્રેષ્ઠ સહુ સખીજન થકી, એ આશ પૂરો હરિ.

† A word has three powers or significations: 1 વાચ્ય primary or
 expressed meaning. 2 લક્ષ્ય secondary or indicated meaning, and 3 વ્યંગ્ય
 implied meaning, sense suggested by indirect allusion or implication.
 Words in the last sense are used in poetry only and not where scientific
 subjects such as logic and metaphysics are treated.

‡ Mr. Keshavlal H. Dhruva, B. A., ventures, in a private commu-
 nication, to express an opinion that Sāmal must be a contem-
 porary of Vallabh, and junior to Premānand. This opinion is based on
 the dates of some of the works of Sāmal: e. g., his Śiva Purāṇ was

Vengañpur (now called Gomtipur), a suburb of Ahmedabad. His father's name was Vîreśwar and mother's Ânandibâi, and his teacher or guru was Nânâbhat. He was well versed in Sanskrit and Hindustani or Vraj, as all the educated people of that period were. He seems to have known Persian too, a not very unusual thing for a member of the higher castes to know, as that was the Court language, Ahmedabad being then under the sway of

his education, the Moguls. For the first time in Gujarati literature, we find in his works a large admixture of Persian words. He had a son called Purshotamdâs, whom he has described as squint-eyed and ugly and possessed of no intelligence, who would go to one place (Dhamandwâd) when asked to go to another (Gatrâd). Sâmal studied Vraj Prosody and wrote his poems in accordance therewith, but the classical छंदs being not much in vogue amongst the people of Gujarat he had to

and Chhappâs. write in such easy modes दोहरा, चौपाई, छप्पा (two and four and six lined stanzas), and the last kind, viz., छप्पा has immortalised him; he is considered the best of the old writers of Chhappâs.

written in A. D. 1748 (Samvat year 1804) and Padmâvati in A. D. 1718 (Samvat year 1774). In a manuscript copy of the Angadvishti seen by him, the year of composition is given as A. D. 1752 (Samvat year 1808). Rakhidas had got a copy made of Sâmal's Stories for the special use of Gamân Bâret. Mr. Dhruva has seen this copy and the year of its transcription is given as 1740 A. D. (1796 Samvat). All this leads him to think that a man composing poems in Samvat year 1808 could not have been born prior to 1700.

The late Kavi Dalpatrām says* that in Gujarat, when Sâmal flourished, all poets had to take the themes of their verses from the Śâstras. A writer of works which were the creations of his own fancy or imagination was tabooed, and for this reason Sâmal who is considered the prince of story-tellers had to put into his performance a flavouring of ancient Sanskrit or religious lore.

Like Premânand, Sâmal was also a reciter of Purânic stories translated from the original Sanskrit. He went from one village to another to recite them, and everywhere he was disappointed: the vested interest of some reciter always came in his way. This made him Sâmal also a reciter of Purânic stories. resolve on the composition of stories in the vernacular to oust the Sanskrit bards, and one thing assisted him. Sanskrit poems when recited to the listeners who did not know the language sent them to sleep, but Sâmal's Gujarati verses rivetted the attention of the audience, who followed his stories eagerly.

A story is current that Sâmal had sworn to himself that he would never wait with his poems Sâmal's vow, upon any one, unless expressly sent for, and he had to wait till he was thirty-four years of age to get one who could appreciate his work. His stories penetrated so far inland as to attract the attention of

* गुजराती भाषणा कवियोनो इतिहास.

बुद्धिप्रकाश. अं. ४ मास एप्रिल, १८६२.

a Kunbi Patel, Rakhidās by name, of the village of Sunj, in the Mātar Taluka of the Kaira District. Rakhidās, although of the agricultural or Pâtidar class, was a lover of letters, and a bard or reciter of heroic poems, by name,

Gamānji, whose company went far to encourage and develop his taste for poetry, formed one of his retinue. Sāmal and the patronage of Rakhidās.

was sent for by Rakhidās who not only kept him as an honoured guest, but invited him to stay with him permanently, and settled some lands on him for his maintenance. For this princely gift and help and appreciation, Sāmal has perpetuated the name of Rakhidās and put him on a level with Bhoj, the renowned King of ancient India, who by his royal liberality encouraged Kalidās and other poets.

Works of Sāmal. Sāmal has composed about 26 works.*

° (1) Thirty two books or stories called बत्रीश पूतळी, including the twenty five books or stories of वैताळपचीशी which work took him ten years (A. D. 1719 to 1729) to write. (2) Seventy two books or stories called सूडा बोतेरी (3) शिवपुराण (4) रेवाखंड (5) रणछोडना श्लोको (6) अंगदविष्टि (A. D. 1752) (7) पद्मावती (A. D. 1718) (8) नंदबत्रिशी (9) रावणमंदोदरी संवाद (10) उद्यम कर्म संवाद (11) सामळ रत्नेमाळा (12) विनेचटनी वार्ता (13) अम-राम कुलीना श्लोको or रस्तम बहादूरनो पवाडो (A. D. 1725) (14) बरास कस्तुरी (15) बोडाणो (16) चंद्र चंद्रावती, (17) काळी माहात्म्य (18) झुकदेवाख्यान (19) सुन्दर कामदार (24) द्रौपदीवल्गहरण (? Its authorship is doubtful, as Sāmal did not write on Puranic subjects) (21) भोजकथा (22) रखीदास चरित्र (Perhaps in this is included कडवा कणबीनी उत्पत्ति) (A. D. 1715) (23) विश्वेश्वराख्यान (24) मदन मोहना (25) रणस्थंभ (26) विधातानी वार्ता.

The first seven were composed under the direct auspices of Rakhidās.

Although he had no school of followers like Premā-
 nand, still he had one disciple, by name,
 Sāmal had no Ghelā Vyās, a Travādi Mevādā by
 followers. caste, whose grandson (daughter's son),
 Ichhāsankar, was alive in A. D. 1862. He had piously
 preserved the works of Sāmal Bhat and specimens of his
 handwriting.

Sāmal's works fall broadly into two divisions, narrative
 and didactic. His longest and best
 Nature of Sāmal's poems are narrative, though not entirely
 work. free from the didactic vein. The story
 of Madan Mohanā, one of his best narrative poems is a
 good sample of the former, while Sāmal Ratna Mālā is an
 example of the latter. It consists of a string of poetical
 passages, setting out the merits and demerits of various
 classes of individuals, of both the sexes, especially the fairer
 sex, describing the several virtues and exhorting people to
 beware of the pitfalls of youth, to be prepared for death, to
 be ready to keep their promises, to profit by learning and
 so on. Many of his verses on these subjects have become
 highly popular and are often quoted.

“It is the stomach for which one has to labour, it is
 for the stomach that one has to work
 Specimen of his as a bandsman. It is for the stomach
 didactic verse. that one has to carry burdens and it is
 for the stomach that one has to praise (flatter) others. It
 is for the stomach that one has to wander in foreign lands,
 and it is for the stomach that one is responsible for one's

sins. It is for the stomach that women make a profession of evil and it is the stomach that makes one travel away from truth. Many are the tricks resorted to for its sake. People (are prepared to) go to hell to fill their stomachs. Sâmal says, Believe this to be true that it is the stomach (hunger) which makes men wicked.*

He has seen woman in two aspects: good and bad.

When he is pointing out the evils wrought by her in public and in private life, he is unmeasured in his condemnation of the sex.

“Some women have murdered their husbands and some have abandoned them. Some have left their noble husbands and married menials. Some have left their home and families and gone to others, some have even left kings and indulged in their passions with slaves. Some have killed their sisters-in-law and mothers-in-law and also their father and mother. Woman belongs to the tribe of demonesses. She has taken away the strength of the strong.”†

* पेट करावे वेठ, पेट वाजां वजडावे;
 पेट उपडावे भार, पेट गुण सौना गावे;
 पेट भमे परदेश, पेटथी पाप करे छे;
 पेट करे छे जार, पेटथी सत्य हरे छे;
 वळी संच प्रपंच अधिक करे, पेट काज नरके पडे,
 सामळ कहे साचु मानजो, पेट पाप नरने नडे.

† कैके मार्या कंथ, कैके परण्या परहरिया;
 कैके उंच अमीर तजी, किंकर वर करिया;

“She is so very faithless that at one moment she would call a man her brother and at the next moment make him her lover (husband).”*

On the other hand, he is not blind to the softening and good influences that woman is always capable of exerting, though it does not appear that Sâmal ever conceived

“A perfect woman nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command.”

To Sâmal woman appears more as a minister of pleasure than as the tender mother, devoting Sâmal's woman a herself to the tender care of her offspring. He looks upon her as one whose business is to chase away care and in old age to soften the miseries of her husband's declining years.

“In youth, she gives pleasure and the happiness of her company. She comforts the body. She talks to you with affection and steals away the sorrows of your heart. She shares equally (your) happiness and unhappiness. She sings of your virtues with a sweet voice. She is accomplished and steals your heart from you and takes pride

कैंके कुटुंब परिवार, तजी चित्त बीजे चाली;
कैं महिपतिने मेली, माननी गमते महाली;

कैंके सासु नणंद संहारियां, मातपिता मर्दन कर्यो,
ए जीवती जात छे जक्षणी, जोर जोरावरनां हर्यो.

* घडी एकमां कहे वीर, कंथ घडीमां करी थापे.

in it. In old age she tends you, her very sight is enough to remove pain from your heart. Even in death she does not leave you, she ascends the funeral pyre by your corpse*.

In the closing lines of the stanza the poet says, "Wicked women are rare."† Perhaps this was Sâmal's real opinion, and his abuse of the sex merely the traditional male view of woman.

The story of Madan Mohanâ, which in its main features, more or less resembles all other Story of Madan Mo-
hanâ, a type of his stories of Sâmal is the story of love at narrative poems.
first sight. Mohanâ, a young princess, has for her tutor a man. In order to avoid any mischief, she is being taught with a *Purdah* between the pupil and the master. Once, while she was at her lessons the son of her father's minister, Madan, happened to come to the teacher, and was a witness to a literary contest between them. This contest, which is a common feature of many of Sâmal's works, consists of the propounding of several riddles in verse by one and their solution by the other.‡

* जौबनमां दे रंग, संग सुख, टाढक तननी;
व्हालपणे करी वात, मटाडे पीडा मननी;
सुख दुःखमां समभाग, राग रुडे गुण गाती;
चतुरा चित्त हरनार, सार उरमां मदमाती;
बळी बृद्धपणे सेवा करे, देख्याथी दिल दुःख टळे,
ए अन्तकाळे अळगी नहि, बहु स्नेहे साये बळे.

† छे नीच कोईज नारियो, स्वभावे सहु नहि सरखी.

‡ For instance,

A dispute arose as to the correctness of a certain reply given by the princess, and the minister's son acted as the arbiter and declared both to be in the right. The princess was a spirited lady and she drew away the *Purdah* and beheld an individual, godlike in beauty. She, a Rajput princess, insisted on being married to him, then and there. His intelligence and his beauty had done their work on her, and in spite of the protests of the Paṇḍit and Madan, the former was compelled to tie the nuptial knot, under threat of the princess committing suicide. Madan pointed out to her the imprudence of the step she was taking in reckless hurry. He said he was a Bania, and, as such, far inferior to her in status, that his father was a servant and not a prince, that he was unworthy of her in many respects—"he was a goat, she an elephant, he was a fox, and she a lion, he was a snail and she a cobra, he was like a well (lit., sink) and she the ocean." He illustrated the indiscreetness of her proposal by many stories, wherein those who had acted in such matters recklessly and hurriedly had come to grief. Tales within tales like the *Hitopdeśa*,

Question. He is born with horns but loses them in his youth, when youth goes and old age appears, the horns reappear,—who is he ?

Reply. The lady says I like your question. It is the crescent moon that is born with horns.

પ્રશ્ન—શીંગ સહિત જે જનમીઓ, જોબનમાં શીંગ જાય;
જોબન ફીટી વૃદ્ધ થયો, શીંગ ફરીને થાય.
ઉત્તર—વાત ગમી વનિતા કહે, અગન (?અજ્ઞ) તળો તું હન્દ્ર;
શીંગ સહિતે જનમીઓ, ચતુર બીજનો ચન્દ્ર.

the Arabian Nights, and the Decameron are characteristic of Sâmal. These stories are told by so many characters and are so numerous, that the main plot forms but a

very small portion of the whole narrative. This packing, or to be more accurate, padding partakes again of all the usual characteristics of the main story, in delineation and in telling, being interspersed with short homilies, preached in the vein of the moralist.* She replied to his position by telling counter stories, where faithfulness of the fair had saved the situation, and she swore by all that was holy to remain faithful to him. The young man had his evil presentiments, but he was powerless before the persistent attitude of the princess, and at last they were joined

* For instance, moralising on the evil consequences of recklessness Madan says:

He who is reckless, one day gets his head cut.

He who is reckless, loses his respect and honor.

He who is reckless, loses his wealth in no time.

He who is reckless, is never happy.

Again, he who is reckless is overcome by a number (lit., conflagration) of calamities.

Sâmal says, he who is reckless in his actions, has at last to repent.

सहसा काम करनार, कोई दिन शीश कटावे;

सहसा काम करनार, मान मरजाद मटावे;

सहसा काम करनार, जर जोतामां खोए;

सहसा काम करनार, सुख तेने नव होए;

धळी सहसा काम करनारने, दुःखदावानळ आवी अहे,

सामळ कहे सहसा कर्म कर्या थकी, विमासण पिंडमां पडे.

in wedlock by the Paṇḍit. None knew of the marriage save Mohanā, her husband and the Paṇḍit. Immediately after, the teacher resigned and wished to go away, reporting that her education was finished. The king, her father, then thought of finding out a husband for his daughter. While consultations were going on between the daughter and her parents, on the best mode of selection, she confessed to her mother that she was secretly married to Madan. When the king came to know of it, the blow fell that Madan had anticipated. The least punishment that the king could be persuaded to inflict on the delinquents, was banishment. The king wanted to kill all the three, but he was told by his minister, that the Śāstras enjoined that a Brahmin should never be beheaded, and that, in spite of a thousand crimes on the part of a woman, humanity enjoined that she too should never be killed. The diwan said that really his son was at fault: he should not have yielded to a situation which was foreign to all the traditions of his caste, community and family; and that, therefore, he should be impaled.* The king was pleased at this disinterested piece of advice, and commuted the death-sentence

- * Avoid a Bania, who utters unpleasant words,
- Avoid a Bania, who makes his secrets public,
- Avoid a Bania, who does things in a hurry,
- Avoid a Bania, who cheats a woman.

वरजો तेह वणिक, जेह अकारं बोले;
 वरजो तेह वणिक, जेह पेटपेटांतर खोले.
 वरजो तेह वणिक, जेह उतावळो थाये;
 वरजो तेह वणिक, जेह वनिता वाहे.

to one of deportation. Accordingly, the Brahmin left at once, and the minister's son prepared to depart also, but the princess insisted on accompanying him. After a great deal of discussion in which the wife supported her contentions by various arguments and illustrations, it was settled that she should go with him, dressed as a man, to avoid inconveniences inevitable to a woman travelling under such difficult circumstances. The rest of the tale is a series of peripatetic adventures which befell them. Although both of them travelled in male garb and passed as brothers, yet the keen eyes of women never failed to make out the real state of things wherever they went, and at one place it chanced that they fell in with a courtesan (गुणका) whose evil intentions separated them, and it was with great difficulty that the princess Mohanâ was able to escape from her wicked clutches. Each, being thus separated from the other, travelled alone and Mohanâ being able to rescue a cobra from a burning jungle became the fortunate recipient of a present from the cobra in the shape of a jewel (मणि), which possessed great curative properties. To one bitten by a snake, to one suffering from leprosy in its most loathsome forms, to one deprived of his eyesight and to one unblessed with progeny, the charm gave relief. Armed with this specific, she visited city after city, and cured sufferers of their complaints. Curiously they all happened to be related to kings, and as she was taken to be a man, the reward invariably given to her was the hand of their daughters.

She was thus able to marry about five or six princesses, but was careful to leave the city as soon after the celebration of the happy event as possible on various pretexts, such as a vow for pilgrimage, in order to guard her secret. But from the last place of her stay, Mohanâ found it impossible to escape and, therefore, she prayed for a period to be allowed to her, before being called upon to live with the princess as her husband. During this period she laid anxious plans for discovering Madan, and one of them was that she caused a picture to be painted, containing exact imitations of herself, Madan, the Pāṇḍit, and Madan's father. She filled in the most suggestive details herself, and placed it in a newly erected temple in the principal square of the town. She at the same time ordered free doles of food to be given to all ascetics, Sādhus and other strangers, coming there from all parts of the country, with instructions to those who had partaken of them, who were going out to foreign lands, to publish the news far and wide, and send in as many more applicants as possible. Her object indeed was that if Madan ever came that way, he would at once understand the import of the whole affair and they would be united; just when the time was expiring, and when she was preparing to sacrifice herself rather than reveal her identity, Madan appeared. He had met with a curious adventure after he was separated from her. While wandering disconsolately he reached a place called Rûpâvatî. The daughter of the king of the place was under the curious vow of marrying only a person who could give

satisfactory solutions to her enigmatic questions, be he a pauper or a prince. Madan was an adept at this work and consequently he had to marry her. But he too delayed consummating his nuptials, till, as he said, he had made a certain pilgrimage. Excusing, therefore, his absence on this score, he once more set out in quest of Mohanâ, and came to the place where the picture adorned the temple. He fainted at the very sight of the picture, which had a deep significance for him, and on the news being conveyed to Mohanâ of the incident she came running to the spot. They recognised one another, and with feelings of indescribable delight, repaired to Mohanâ's palace. An exchange of confidences took place, of course, and, as a result of that, they resolved to keep up appearances till they reached their own native place. It may be mentioned, that they had till then lived merely as brother and sister, and had sworn not to enter upon a connubial life, till they were taken back by their parents into their respective families. Mohanâ then gave her father-in-law to understand that she had to go on an expedition for collecting certain arrears of revenue, and she started on it in company of her newly married wife with great pomp and circumstance. On her way she collected all her other wives, as did Madan, his. By the time they reached their home, their retinue had swelled into a large army, and the king was naturally alarmed at what he thought was an invasion by an unknown foe. But anticipating this difficulty, they had secretly made known to Madan's father

who they were, and he came out on behalf of the king to parley with them. In the end, the whole story was laid bare, and those ladies who had married Mohanâ had, of course, to transfer their affections to Madan, and he had the satisfaction of showing to his father and the king that he had been able to win not one, but more than half a dozen of princesses, kings' daughters, though they thought him unworthy of Mohanâ's hand. They both admitted their fault, and blessed the couple who, of course, thereafter lived in complete joy and happiness, and became the parents of five sons. They did not forget the Paṇḍit, in their hour of joy, but sent for him and made a present of thirty villages in commemoration of his having tied the nuptial knot.

The poet gives his own opinion of the poem at the end. He says, "every verse is full of interest," "only a Paṇḍit can appreciate this tale of good manners (विवेक)."

Sâmal's opinion of his
own work.

"It contains simple language, simple verses (couplets), simple stories of good manners. He only who can teach in simple language is the true poet. The ingenuity of men and women, the life stories of men and women, courage and wisdom, adventures and holy, auspicious deeds, a poem such as this (containing all these), will teach wisdom and amuse the minds of the people. A description of the nature of humanity is sure to be appreciated."*

* It is also towards the close of the poem that Sâmal Bhat indulges in his fling at Premânand. He says:—

Sāmal's besetting sin, no doubt, was the introduction into his poems, in season and out of season, of those riddles, which at times degenerated into mere idle questions, which required no effort to solve them. They are a sort of mental gymnastics which need have no place in poetry according to modern notions, but this branch of verse-making, fortunately created no imitators worth the name and it practically began and ended with him.*

His delineations of male and female beauty are much inferior to those of Premānand. He is at his best in setting out the beauties of Madan and Mohanā, but they read more like a catalogue of points of beauty to be found

Sāmal's delineation
of beauty inferior
to Premānand's.

भण्यो नथी कोई पुराण हुं, भण्यो नथी कोई वेद,
रसालंकार न आवडे, मन न पामे खेद.
घर घर राग ताणुं नहि, पुत्र न मुज गुण गाय,
राज दरबारे रझळुं, मेळवी नथी पसाय.
भाट ब्राह्मण ने भांडवा, लांबी मूकी पोक,
रीझी भला भला कहे, तेथी थाये शोक.

“I have not learnt any Purāṇa (Premānand's poems were founded on the Purāṇas), I have not studied any Veda. I do not know figures of speech nor am I sorry for the same. I do not go to house after house and sing there, nor have I got a son to sing my praises (Premānand's son, Vallabh, did so). I do not wander from one court to another, and get presents. It is only the Bhāt (bards), the Brahmins and the buffoons who bawl out loudly, the audience get pleased and praise them, but such a thing makes me sorry.’

* There was a faint imitation of this kind after him. Dalpatrām

in text books on the subject, rather than a natural description of human form and beauty as seen by a poet's eye. One may as well refer to a text book on horses and horsemanship and find out from it the points of beauty and gracefulness in a horse. The descriptions are, therefore, dull and without animation. They are too long to be quoted here but the curious reader would have no difficulty in finding them.*

The late Mr. Tripathi sees in Sâmal, traits of character much beyond those of a pleasing story-teller. He says, "He wrote a large number of poems, all fictions, in which he constructed for his audience, a new world of men and women who soared above the narrow minded and blasting social institutions of his countrymen, and he revelled in pointing out and picturing to them, modes of living which made his characters, parents and children, men and women, meet each other upon terms of independence and toleration, which could have no place under the social prejudices and practice of his countrymen."

Tripathi's opinion of
Sâmal examined.

What he means by this is, that Sâmal's conception of social reform was much in advance of his times, indeed it seems to be much in advance of even the present times. It is not his hero of a hundred stories, King Vikram, who like Haroun

was one who wrote in this strain. But it took no strong hold of any other poet.

* See page 371, Vol. V of the Brihat Kāvya Dehana, for Mohanā and page 385 for Madan.

al-rashid flits unobserved from place to place and visits *incognito* with the help of his supernatural aide-de-camp, Vaitâl, who is the representative of this conception of social reform. But it is the female characters, his princesses, who seem to have caught Mr. Tripathi's fancy. "The men and women whom he creates marry without any distinction of caste. Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas (he might add Śûdras, for one of his heroes once married the daughter of an oil woman), intermarry in this world of the poet. And they marry by fancy, or charm or true love, and often in defiance of parental wishes." Then he develops a situation, where a young Bania girl, who does not want to marry a husband chosen by her father, vows to remain a spinster all her life rather than marry him. Now, no doubt, this idea is foreign to Hindu religion and custom, but still at best it can be taken merely as a threat on the part of the girl rather than that the poet wished to have this bold and original innovation introduced into Hindu society. The inter-marriages are there no doubt and marriages in defiance of parental wishes are also there. But then it is to be remembered also that Sâmal drew his inspiration from Sanskrit works and from legends current in his time, and it is not uncommon to find in them *contretemps* of this sort. Okhá married her husband, in defiance of parental wishes and such intermarriages as delineated above were not unusual in old days. It seems that he rather recorded old facts than wished for an innovation.

Dancing women (गुणका) play a considerable part in the narratives of Sâmal. They were women like the famous Aspasia, well educated at a time when their sex was ignorant. They are assigned the task of helping heroes and heroines in distress by their ingenuity and skill.

The great question of Fate and Freewill inspired Sâmal to write a poem.* By means of a large number of illustrative stories, he shows the fatuity of relying upon one of them only. He considers that they are both inseparable, they are one and the same. "Human Effort is the pivot upon which Fate or Destiny turns."

Sâmal's women throw his men into shade. They fill a very large and prominent part of his canvas. They are not the helpless, illiterate, limp, invertebrate creatures whom we see round about us even to-day. They are daring, educated, refined, resourceful, full of grace and beauty, ever ready for adventures and mostly, be it said to their credit, chaste. They can sing, play, dance and ride. Indeed one wonders at times that the poet who delineated these characters should be the same that outlined their features in such sinister colors, as are to be found in the poems in which he dwells on the vices of the sex.

* उद्यम कर्मसंवाद, a dialogue between Human Effort and Fate.

Thus does Sâmal sing. He is a poet, bold and refined,
 Sâmal stands alone. and has the whole field to himself. He
 stands alone. He followed none, none
 followed him and none could imitate him.

Like Premânand, he was an accomplished Hindi
 Sâmal knew both Hindi scholar, and some of his poems are
 and Persian. interspersed with Hindi verses. His
 use of Persian words is also greater
 than that of any of his contemporaries.

In closing his review of the seventeenth century Mr.
 Tripathi thus sums up. "Akho, Premânand and Sâmal
 are thus the three leading stars of Guja-
 Poems of Akho, Pre-
 mânand and Sâmal not
 subservient to religion. rati poetry, and as will appear from the
 history of subsequent centuries, they
 are the only poets who throughout the whole history of
 Gujarati literature, wrote pure and genuine poetry without
 any substantial subservience to religion."

The group of minor poets belonging to this century
 is too large to be passed over without
 Minor poets of the notice. They are smaller stars, with
 century. varying magnitudes, with Vallabh, the
 son of Premânand at the top and versifiers like Dwârkâ-
 dâs at the bottom.

Nâkar and Mukund are generally mentioned together.
 Nâkar was a Bania belonging to Baroda,
 Nâkar: Mukund. and he is the author of many poems,
 out of which seven only are published. They are the

Hariśchandrākhyān, Śiva Vivāh (the marriage of Śiva), Dhruvākhyān, Chandrahāsākhyān, Lava Kushākhyān, Mri-gasamvād, and Bhiladi nā Bār Mās. He composed them in plain, simple language, with a view to make a present of them to Brahmins, who might recite them before their audiences and so earn their livelihood. He thought this would bring him religious merit.* Mukund came from Dwārkā and was a Gugli Brahmin by caste. He is considered to be a contemporary of Nākar as his best known work, the Bhakta Māl (a rosary of Saints or Devotees) was written in Samvat year 1708 (A. D. 1665). His lives of Kabir, who is admired both by Hindus and Mahomedans, and Gorakh are indeed well written and full of information. The poet declares that when Kabir expired all creation wept, men, animals and plants alike. Both Hindus and Mahomedans began to fight amongst themselves: one said Kabir belonged to the Hindus, and that they would burn him on a pyre; the other said, he belonged to

* A valuable contribution on the life and work of Nākar has been published in the Brihat Kāvya Dohana, Part VIII, from the pen of Ambalal B. Jani, B. A., Sub-Editor of the Gujarati. He has carefully studied the poet and his work from both his published and unpublished poems. In his opinion this poet flourished in Samvat year 1550-60, and must have been alive till 1630. He is inclined to think that for some of the best work of Premānand, such as the Nalākhyān, the materials have been supplied by Nākar's verses. He had access to his unpublished works, many of which are in possession of Mr. T. M. Tripathi, B. A., and extracts published by him in his note go to show that Nākar did write verses of merit.

Mukund's Kabir
Charitra.

the Mahomedans, and they would bury him in a grave. Seeing them thus fighting, the saint took pity on them, and came back to the earth and tried to pacify both. To the Hindus he said, "Brothers, I should be burnt," and to the Mahomedans, "Why do you quarrel? I am born of dust and will return to dust (shall be buried)." He then divided his body into two, and gave one half each to the Hindus and the Yavanas."*

It is not possible, nor from our present point of view very material to ascertain the dates of the birth and death of these minor poets. The only means of ascertaining the time during which they lived and wrote are the

* Mukund was a Hindi scholar and the closing lines of his Kabir Charitra summarised above are composed in Hindi.

कवित.

बस्ती बनस्पति रोई, दुनी ओर बनकी,
हिन्दु ही मुसलमीन, लड़े दोऊ मील मील;
कबीर हे तेरा मेरा, चिता घोर करंगे.
* * * *

महा दयालु हे संत, स्वधामसे पीछे आये,
दोनुको समज दीनी, भाई हम जरंगे.
मुसलमीनकु कहा, काहको फिसाद करो,
भाई हम जाय भूमी, मांही सोई परंगे.
वेसा उच्चारन करी, देहके दो भाग करी,
हिन्दु यवनको दीने, संत दयावान जो.

dates and years of composition generally—almost invariably—given by all of them, in the closing lines of their poems. This has enabled the following poets to be assigned to this century.

Devidâs was a Gandharva by caste, and lived at Sojitrâ in the Petlâd district. He wrote Devidâs, and his Rukmiṇiharaṇ is Samvat year 1660 (A. D. 1604). It describes the marriage of Krishṇa with Rukmiṇī, whom he abducted while she was going to worship the goddess Ambikâ in a temple. She was the daughter of Bhîmak, the King of Vidarbha. She did not like Śîsupâl whom her brother Rukmai-yâ wanted her to marry, and so wrote in secret to Krishṇa to come and take her away. Krishṇa did so. This sort of abduction was in vogue then, and was not considered disgraceful. Directly Rukmai-yâ came to know of this violence, he pursued with a large army the chariot in which the eloping couple was driving away. But Krishṇa was able to defeat him and his army and was at last going to kill him with a powerful arrow, when in a passage of some pathos his wife began to solicit him to spare him.* “Rukmiṇī began to

* रुक्मिणी विनती विनवे, यादवजी जी;
तमो सांभळो श्री महाराज, कहुं प्रीतमजी जी.
ए खोड बेसे अमने, यादवजी जी;
ए मूको मारो वीर, कहुं प्रीतमजी जी.
में मात तात सहू मूकीआं, यादवजी जी;
हुं तो आबी तमारे साथ, कहुं प्रीतमजी जी.

entreat, O Yâdavaji, listen to what I say, O my dear lord. The disgrace of this deed of yours would rest on my head, O Yâdavaji, therefore spare my brother, O my dear lord. I have left my mother, father and all, O Yâdavaji, and have come with you, O my dear lord. I have left the palace of my parents, O Yâdavaji, you are my all in all and you are my sole support, O my dear lord. It does not behove you to slay my brother, O Yâdavaji. She spoke as above and said, O my lord.”

Krishṇa was unable to resist her entreaty and spared him. On reaching Dwârkâ he celebrated a marriage with her in accordance with the usual rites and ceremonies, and from the description given by the poet of this celebration, it appears that we, in Gujarat, have not changed in the least during the last three centuries in our marriage rites. Some of the songs,* sung at the marriage of Krishṇa and Rukmiṇî are still used at weddings in Gujarat.

में आत भुवन सहु ताज कीधां, यादवजी जी;
 मारे तन मन धन तमो आप, कहुं प्रीतमजी जी.
 मारो भाई मारवो नव घटे, यादवजी जी;
 दुःख धरी एम बोल्यां वाण, कहुं प्रीतमजी जी.

- * For instance the song beginning with

ब्रह्माए दीधी दश गांठ, छबीला दोरडो क्यम छूटशे ?
 तारो वसुदेव तात तेडाव, छबीला दोरडो क्यम छूटशे ?
 बळी देवकी मात बोलाव, छबीला दोरडो क्यम छूटशे ?

Appropriate changes in the name of the bride-groom's father, mother, etc., are of course made.

Śivdās belonged to Cambay, at one time a very important city of Gujarat. He was a Nāgar Brahmin by caste and he is the writer of Draupadī Swayamvara, Dāngav-Ākhyān, Ekādaśī Māhātmya and other miscellaneous verses. The subject matter of the first is taken from the Mahābhārat, and of the others from Purāṇic mythology. There is nothing striking in his work. He wrote the Swayamvara in Samvat year 1673. He wrote it at Bijapur, in the Deccan. It is curious how many old poets of Gujarat have lived in the Deccan and written their works there, even in times when communication between the north and the south was not so easy as it is now. Premānand did so much of his work at Nandarbar, and this poet did it at Bijapur still further south, while Vīrji, a pupil of Premānand wrote at Burhānpur and Ratanji at Bāglān.

Vishnudās a co-pupil of Śivdās, also lived at Cambay and was a Nāgar Brahmin by caste. It is not known when he was born or died, but the dates of his works, about twenty seven in number, range from A. D. 1578 to 1657 and he is therefore supposed to have lived to a very great age. He has versified many Parvas (Chapters) of the Mahābhārat and almost all the Kāndas (sections) of the Rāmāyaṇ, in addition to writing several Ākhyāns. Some of his other works, such as Kunvarbāinun Mosālun, the Lakṣmaṇa Haraṇ, and Sudāmā Charitra, are now supposed to have

furnished the originals on which Premānand worked. Vishnudās himself has quoted, in the *Mosālun*, Narsinh Mehta's own verses on the subject, thus the fact, that Narsinh Mehta had written a poem on this miraculous incident in his life, which till was recently in dispute is now proved, and Narsinh Mehta's successors, like Vishnudās and Premānand merely worked on the materials left by him. Premānand in his *Lakṣmaṇa Haran*, alludes to a work of Vishnudās bearing the same name, thus showing that he too took advantage of the work of his predecessor. Vishnudās' poems, though they are very simple, still at times shew that he was able to infuse force and feeling whenever occasion required it, in the narration of incidents. He wrote one poem called the *Dhruvākhyān*, under the name of Haridās.*

Viśwanāth Jāni, belonged to Pātan, and in A. D. 1652 he wrote a poem called the *Life of Narsinh Mehta*, (नरसिंह मेहेताजुं चरित्र). It comprises all the well known incidents in his life, where Krishṇā helped him out of his

difficulties. Parts of this poem, have, been utilised by Premānand in his two most popular poems, the *Māmerun*

* Besides this one there was another poet of this name. He was one of the two sons of Bhālaṇ, whose names were Uddhav and Vishnudās. They too had composed the *Rāmāyaṇ* in verse; the date given in the closing lines of one of its Chapters is A. D. 1519. A short but informative and critical biography of Vishnudās with a list of his poems, is given in the Eighth Volume of the *Brihat Kāvya Dohana*, from which I have summarised. The writer is Mr. Natvarlal I. Desai, B. A., who has worked on this branch of literature under the guidance his father, Itcharam S. Desai.

and the Hundi and in places there is such a close resemblance between the verses of the the two, that it would appear as if the more famous but junior poet had "lifted" them out of the work of his contemporary, without acknowledging his indebtedness to him. He has written also the Hār Charitra otherwise called the Hārmâlâ, and it is suspected that the work of that name attributed to Premânand was partially written by Jâni. "The fight of Ganim" is a historical poem said to be written by him.*

Of Murâri, nothing is known beyond his works.

Murâri and His Íśvar Vivâh describes in a humorous way the difficulty that Śiva (Mahá-

dev) had in marrying the daughter of Menâ and Himâlaya. Śiva presented himself at the gates of the mother-in-law in all the glory of his clothelessness, riding a bullock with

quite an army of Bhuts (spirits) following him. Menâ was keenly disappointed, and cursed Nârada, a rishi well-

known for his mischief-making nature. He had given quite a glowing account of the bride-groom which at close quarters turned out to be false. In the end explanations followed, and she was convinced of the mightiness of her son-in-law, and allowed the marriage to take place.

Śrīdhar Swâmi has also written a poem, called Gaurī

Charitra, in which a celebrated incident in the life of Mahádev is described.

* Very interesting notes bearing on this subject are to be found in Eighth Volume of the Brihat Kāvya Dohana.

While the god was undergoing austerities (तपसु) in a forest, his wife Pârvatî undertook to divert his attention from it, and she did so by transforming herself into a beautiful Bhil or forest woman, and dancing before him. Her beauty and dance were enough to distract him and he offered to take her home. For a god like Mahâdev, to fall from his high estate and offer to marry a Śûdra woman was a great fall, but so enamoured was he of her that he ignored the disgrace. After a time an explanation was given and everything ended happily.

Narhari wrote his Gîtâ in Samvat year 1677. This is all that is known of him. So far as Narhari and we have been able to ascertain, this is the first poetical version or rather translation of the entire Bhagavad Gîtâ into Gujarati. A perusal of it shows the poet to be a fine Sanskrit scholar, who has been able to render some of the difficult passages of his Gîtâ, the Lord's Song into smooth-running and simple Gujarati. One does not feel as if one were reading the rendering into Gujarati of a highly philosophical Sanskrit work; the expression of the sentiment and the translation of the thoughts are so natural, that the whole poem appears to be an original work. Ratneśwar, a disciple of Premânand during this period also produced another translation of the same work.

Of the pupils of Premânand, Vallabh, his son, stands at the top. Premânand is said to have assigned to some of them the lines on Vallabh:

which they were to work, and his son, Vallabh, was advised to write poetry, which, would flatter no prince or possible patron. This advice was a bold innovation as the custom was to overload poems with the praises of individuals from whom authors hoped to get help. Vallabh carried out the behest so far that he praised none save his own father, and that too with a vengeance. The great Hindi poet

his partiality
for his father,

Chand, called Chand Baradâyi, is so severely handled by him in comparison with Premânand, that we feel contempt

for the character of one, so blind to the merits of others, that he could see no ability or good in any one else save his own father, whose fame was local, when compared with that of Chand. Excepting a few stray incidents illustrating his want of control over his temper, and

roughness of manners and expression, and impetuous temper. at times bordering on impudence and

abuse, there is not much to learn about his life. These characteristics lie so much on the surface of his works that they could be gathered without any special mention. His father's advice to him never to praise a living individual is said to have been the cause of his destroying a poem, written by him in praise of Premânand's friend, Mâdhav Sheth, and it was for the same reason that he had to abandon his ambition of becoming a court poet, as that at least would have compelled him to eulogise the reigning prince.

Allusion has already been made to the part taken by

Vallabh in disparaging his father's contemporary, Sâmal. The point at issue was whether the function of poetry was story-telling like that of Sâmal, the stories being founded on imaginary subjects; or whether it was the clothing of subjects with poetic figures and ideas, those subjects being taken from the Purâṇas. Vallabh, of course, upheld his father's method, and spared no words in condemning Sâmal and his sons. His Vallabh Jhaghado*—the quarrel of Vallabh—is full of pitiless personal allusions. Sâmal's son was squint-eyed, and Vallabh spitefully referred to this defect in his abuse. His idea was that the sons of Premânand, himself and his brother Jivaṇrâm, were there to defend their father as against the squint-eyed son of Sâmal.

Virji, one of Premânand's pupils was assigned the function of writing stories like that of Sâmal, and he wrote the Surekhâ-haraṇ. But in merit, it fell very far short of Sâmal's story of Padmâvatî, and that gave a handle to Vallabh to banter even Virji. He called him a woman, an effeminate being, making a pun on the last syllable of his name—ji—which would mean-mother. As a counter-blast to Sâmal's poem Angad Vishti, where the great representative of the monkey tribe goes to Râvaṇ, to see if he could negotiate a peace, he wrote Krishṇa Vishti, where

* By some the authorship of it is attributed to Premânand.

Vallabh's Krishna
Vishti,

Krishna goes as a messenger of peace to the Kauravas on behalf of the Pāṇḍavas. In doing so, he flings a word of abuse at a poet who could conceive of no other emissary than the monkey, when a far superior individual was at hand. Besides this, the composition of Krishna Vishti was a great triumph for Vallabh. Not one of his disciples to whom he had assigned special lines of work, was able to satisfy Premānand with his work. Vîrji, we have already seen, had failed, and so had Ratneśwar, who was directed to write verses like those of the well-known Marāṭhi poets, Moropant and Vāman. Vallabh was directed to follow the spirit of Hindi poetry and he did his work so well in his Krishna Vishti, that Premānand and Premānand's satisfaction. was more than satisfied and called upon him to ask for whatever boon he liked. Vallabh said, "The vow you have taken not to put on your turban till there was literature worth the name in Gujarat is now fulfilled. I too have taken a vow not to put on my turban till I have successfully carried out your behests. You say, I have done so now. Therefore, put on your turban." Premānand could not resist the appeal, and put on his turban. He did so for the nonce only as he felt that his vow had not been fulfilled in its entirety.*

Premānand used to call him, Vallabh the mad, be-

* These statements would be found in the different volumes of the *Prāchīna Kāvya Mālā* relating to the different poets.

Vallabh nicknamed
mad. cause he always found him like a mad man, running atilt against some one or another. After his father's death Vallabh asked his brother Jīvaṇrām to give no other share to him out of the patrimony, except all his father's works. He cited by way of contrast the instance of Ratneśwar, whose sons divided his works, instead of one of them taking possession of all of them. The Inheritance of Premānands's literary works. division led to their being lost to the world, as one brother got one portion of a poem, and the other, another. Jīvaṇrām acceded to his request, but late in life Vallabh felt the pinch of poverty, as the works brought him no wealth.

He is said to have written a life of his father, his last work, called Premānand Kathā, in which His Premānand Kathā unpublished. to please his fathers's fancy, he has made use of only pure Gujarati words. This work, however, has not seen the light of day.

His ambition was to write poems illustrating all the nine Rasas,—Tragic, Comic, Heroic, Vallabh's ambition, Terrific, Erotic, Wrathful, etc.

His works are the Duhśāsana-rudhira-pānākhyān (A. D. 1724), Kuntī-prasannākhyān (A. D. 1721), Yakṣa Praśnottar (A. D. 1725), Kṛṣṇa Vishti,* Vallabh Jhaghado,* Premānand Kathā,* Mitra Dharmākhyān (A. D. 1754), Yudhiśthira-Vrakodarākhyān and many others.

* These works having not yet been given to the public, so their dates are not given.

The insult offered by Duhśāsana to Draupadī, told in the Mahābhārat, is the subject of the Duhśāsana Rudhirapān. When Yudhiśthira staked her as his last stake, she was in her periods, and secluded as is the custom at such times. A message was sent to her to come to the Council. When she refused to attend Duhśāsana rushed to her chamber, and dragged her in her *deshabille*, ignoring her protests, into the Council of elders. Bhīma, unable to witness the indignity silently, vowed vengeance on him, and took an oath that he would not rest content till he had drunk the blood of the individual who had laid desecrating hands on his wife. The whole poem is in the heroic vein. Bhīma is the hero with Kṛishṇa as his squire, his antagonist being Duhśāsana. Where the poet depicts the courage of Karna, he gives a picture of what courage in a Kṣatriya means. The poem is conceived and executed in a very admirable manner.

The Yakṣa Praśnottar, in which all the Pāṇdavas excepting Yudhiśthira are killed for failing to answer the questions set to them, by the guardian jinn of a tree, growing near a lake, before being allowed to quench their thirst from it, and are brought back to life as the latter gave satisfactory answers, is couched in the tragic vein.

The Kuntī Prasannākhyān is an example of how he

Kuntī Prasannākhyān. describes the preternatural or marvelous. The mansion built by Maya Dānav—the architect of the gods—for the Pāṇḍavas was a piece of beautiful, wonderful and marvellous workmanship. Its description in the Mahābhārat is worth perusal. He was able to give to water the appearance of glass and vice versa; the delusion was so complete that people actually tried to walk on the water and removed their shoes while nearing the surface of glass for fear of wetting them. On this surface did the mother of the Pāṇḍavas (Kuntī) see the reflection of the seven-trunked elephant of Indra called Airāvat, and so life-like was the representation that she asked her sons to get the animal for her. For this purpose, Bhīma and Arjun had to go to the region of the gods—Swarga—in the heavens, on a bridge constructed of arrows. After a strenuous fight with the divine guardians of the elephant, they were able to bring him to the earth and present him to their mother. The

opening portion of this Ākhyān consists
Attack on poet Chand. of a bitter attack on the poet Chand.

He says “Chand has written one work only (Rāsā) while Premānand has written two or three long poems (Bhāratas). Chand has praised a king of the earth (Prithirāj), while Premānand’s poetry is like the sun. The Bhāts (the caste to which Chand belonged) are descended from the Brahmins, while Brahmins (the caste to which Premānand belonged) are descended from Brah-mā, Chand is thus inferior to the father of the poet (i. e.,

Vallabh). * ” Towards the end of the poem he indulges in a mean attack on Sâmal in terms very thinly veiled. A

and Sâmal. Brâhmin, while gazing at the elephant

which was brought down from heaven to earth, is made to write out *impromptu* verses, in which he says he would not accept as a reward for his poetry, gleanings from the harvest-floor of any one, alluding in sarcastic terms to the reward in kind that Sâmal had received from his Zemindar patron, Rakhidâs.†

In this poem Vallabh is seen to be proud of his parentage and spiteful towards his rivals.

The Mitra-dharmâkhyân relates the story of two friends, Indu and Mindu. In spite of the
Mitra-dharmâkhyân, ungratefulness of one of them, who was
and abuse of Sâmal. on the point of murdering the other,
that very friend rescues him from many dangerous and inconvenient positions. Even here, Vallabh has not spared

* भारत ससुं प्रमाण, रासाना तमासा भाळो,
कर्षा भारत बे त्रण, आरत ऊवेखीये.
पृथ्वीश प्रशंसा कथी, मान शेजुं मोखुं तेमां,
प्रेमानंदनी कविता, सविताशी पेखिये.
ब्राह्मणथी भाट थया, वंशज विधिना आ तो,
कबीश्वरना पिताथी, चंद मंद देखीए.

† एवो जोग जोई एक, ब्राह्मण के भाट आव्यो,
गुण गावा लाग्यो झट, कविता नांखी करी.
शिबीसम दानेश्वरी, नृप अमे टेक रखी-
दा कनेथी दान लेवुं, खल्लुं लेउं ना जरी.

Sátal, about whom he says that he is a disgrace to Gujarat. "There are some (poets) who forget their duty as Bráhmīns, they have chosen to inhabit Gujarat, and therefore, bring disgrace on her. They soldier without soldier." (They soldier disgrace to Gujarat without soldier).*

In the dialogue between Bhīma and his elder brother Yudhiṣṭhira, Vallabh has tried to delineate Draupadī's wrath and rebuke to Yudhiṣṭhira. Wrathfulness. Bhīma and Draupadī score here, and the wrath and anger depicted by the poet cannot be surpassed. The following extract shows how the poet makes Draupadī nag at her devoted husband, "If you wished to be merciful, why did you become a great king? . . . If you wished to observe your Dharma, then the instance of Kauśik who abandoned his kingdom was before you . . . If your nature was gentle, then my lord, you should have rested satisfied with the one kingdom, Indraprastha, you had got . . . Why did you perform the Rájasūya Yajna and incur sins? You are born a Kshatriya and therefore you have to do these (evil) actions. If you had been born an ascetic, then you would not have had to do anything bad. Draupadī glared while she spoke these words, with her head thrown back, and threatening with her uplifted hand."†

* द्विज धर्म भुलनारा, बास बस्या तेणे करी,
गुजरातने कलंक, रेण विना रेवता.

† दयाळु भवुं हतुं जो, तो थवा शें भूप मोटा ?

* * * * *

Both Vallabh and his father were very proud of Gujarati, which in their opinion was second to Sanskrit only. They could not brook to hear Hindi laying claims to that position and in the opening of this work, Vallabh narrates how his father tried conclusions with a Hindi, and by belabouring him with hard words proved, to his satisfaction the superiority of Gujarati. The most remarkable features of Gujarati which appeared to strike them, are thus described by Vallabh. "In point of delicacy, it is more delicate than a lotus flower, and honey and nectar yield to it in sweetness. In no other language is such purity to be found, while in point of antiquity it is considered supreme. It is the leader of the nine Rasas and it gives happiness. Only those who are not acquainted with it speak ill of it. Those who say that it does not contain a bit of spiritedness err, because

ધર્મ જ્યારે ધારવો તો, તો તજ્યું કૌશિકે રાજ,

* * * * *

જો સ્વભાવ શાંત હતો, તો તો ઇન્દ્રપ્રસ્થ એક,

જે મલ્લયું હતું તે સ્વામી, છેડે સુખી થાવું.

* * * * *

રાજસૂય આરંભીને, પાપમાં શે જાણું,

ક્ષત્રી કૂલ્લધર્મ ધર્યો, માટે કર્યો કૂડાં કટ,

થયા હોત તપસી જો, કૂડું ક્યાં ત્યાં ગાણું ?

ચક્ષને ચઢાવી કરી, કરાંગુલીને હલાવી,

શીર્ષને ધૂળાવી અતિ, વામા બધી વેળ ત્યાં.

they have not seen the works dealing with heroic incidents.'''*

Vallabh vows, that if he be blessed with as long a life as his father, he will compose works which will put the Divine language (Sanskrit), let alone Hindi, to shame.

Virji was an inhabitant of Burhānpur on the Tapti.

Virji, He came to Barodā and was welcomed by Premānand, who assigned to him the task

of writing narrative poetry like that of Sāmal. Virji attempted it but with poor results and was always the butt of Vallabh's jokes. He was possessed of a good voice, and therefore Premānand called him to his help at times, and Virji sang his verses with success. His works comprise

- his works 1. Kāmāvatī nī Kathā (A. D. 1669)
 2. Balirājā nun Ākhyān (A. D. 1675)
 3. Kākurāj Kathā 4. Surekhā Harāṇ 5. Daśāvatār (A. D. 1686) 6. Vyās Kathā.

Virji was vain, shallow and illiterate. His promises

* કોમલતા કમલથી અધિક દેખાય જેમાં,
 મધુ-મુધા મિષ્ટપને હારી હારી જાય છે,
 અમલતા એના જેવી નથી કોઈ ભાષા મધ્ય,
 પ્રાચીનપણું તો જેનું મોટેરું મનાય છે,
 નવરસની નાયિકા, સુખ દાયિકા છે સિદ્ધ,
 જાણે નહિ તેહ એના છોટા ગુણ ગાય છે.
 કર્ડકપણું કહે છે, નથી એના માંહી રજ,
 વીર ગ્રંથ ભાલ્યા નહિ, યત્તા તેણે ખાય છે.

are great but his performances fall far short of them. He boasts that as beautiful lines as he composed are not to be found in the Purāṇas, and that he was so painstaking that in order to write his *Bali Rājākhyān*, he completely studied the *Bhāgavat*, the *Bhārat* and the *Purāṇas*, a stupendous task. He was also asked by *Premānand* to compose poetry on the lines of Persian and Urdu poets.

Ratneśwar, a *Mewādā Brahmin* of *Dabhoi*, was a contemporary of *Premānand*, and had studied at *Benares* before he took to writing poetry.

He had, like some other educated persons of his time, to fall back on the profession of reciting *Purāṇas* to earn his living, and thus had come into conflict with vested interests. Those older *Purāṇis* who had already been following the profession, could not brook this trespass on their preserves, by a person of acknowledged superior intelligence, for he was educated at *Benares*, and the open insults and injuries, at times amounting to personal violence, offered to him, in order to drive him away from places frequented by them, were many and persistent. He was denounced, and insulted at caste dinners also, but he rose superior to these annoyances and at last triumphed over them. His work was appreciated by *Premānand*, who himself was no favourite of this orthodox *Purāṇi* tribe. He was led to leave *Dabhoi*, his birth place, because he feared that if he stayed there longer his life would

His persecution by
Purāṇis.

be in danger, but in leaving home, he made a vow that he would compose such a work as would be read in each and every home, that even old women at their spinning wheel would recite it, and thus give a death blow to the business of the Purân reciters.

He was a great favourite of the Vallabhâchârya Mahâraj of the place, who called him the Vyâs of the Kaliyuga, a very high compliment, which added to the jealousy of his

Approbation of his
work. rivals. From Dabhoi he went to a place called Kainet, on the banks of the

Narmada and there wrote his Bhâgavat in twelve chapters (Dwâdaśa-Skandha), which met with the approval of Premânand. With this composition he returned to Dabhoi, and his recitation of it won so much praise, that all his townsmen made him a present of a house, which even now is known as "Ratneśwar's Rooms."

Allusion has already been made to the division of Ratneśwar's literary effects amongst his sons after his death. They did not realise the value of their father's work, and made a great mistake when they divided it up in this way.

Unfortunate partition
of his literary effects. They squabbled over the Bhâgavat, a very substantial volume in size. In the

partition of the manuscript one secured the first and last three (1-3 and 10-13), and the other the remaining (4 to 9) chapters. The son to whom the first and last three parts were given was illiterate, and those who were jealous of Ratneśwar's reputation thought this a good opportunity for taking revenge on him even after his death.

They told him that his father liked this work most, and hence he had better send it with him to heaven, by burning it on his funeral pyre. He agreed to it, and was on the point of consigning it to the flames when some old Brahmins told him that it was usual to give libations of water to such departed souls and so he had better throw the leaves into water, or even if he dipped them into water, that would do. He did so, and even thus did the Purāṇis partially wreak their vengeance. They were thus lost. It is said, one Sadhu, Kālidās by name, has rewritten them.

Ratneśwar was a man of a long suffering nature, patient under calamities and of dogged perseverance. In religion he was a Vaishṇav, a devotee of Rādhā Krishṇa. He was advised by Premānand to translate Sanskrit works into Gujarati, as his knowledge of Sanskrit was scholarly and after Premānand, he was the next man to embellish Gujarati with poetical translations of standard Sanskrit works.

Ratneśwar's works are, 1. The Bhagawad Gītā, 2. The Mûrkha Lakshṇāvalī (signs of foolishness) (A. D. 1714) 3. Mahiman Stotra 4. Śīsupāl Vadha 5. Gangālaharī 6. The Bhāgavat, all translations from Sanskrit, and 7. Kāmavilās 8. Rādhā Krishṇa nā Mahinā 9. Vairāgyalatā and several padas, his original compositions, 10. Aśwamedh 11. Lankā kāṇḍa (Rāmāyaṇa) 12. Ātma Vichār Chandrodaya.

In his Padas, he inculcates the Doctrine of Bhakti

which according to him is indispensable to mankind. In various shapes and at various stages of the development of humanity, and in various countries, this yearning after Bhakti has manifested itself. In doing so, "some became

Doctrine of Bhakti
preached by him.

the devotees of the moon and the sun, some of the earth and some of the nine planets. Some of the clay, some of the dust, some of the gods inhabiting the river ghâts (bathing places), and some of the upright road-side stones, some worshipped the tiger and some the elephant. Some would be found worshipping Shaikhs and some Hindu recluses (Gosâvi Sâdhus), some worshipping man and some worshipping woman. There are a million kinds of devotees. What proofs shall I give you? Ratneśwar says, show your devotion earnestly and you will enjoy the rare pleasure of salvation.'''*

The Mûrkhâvalî catalogues the characteristics and doings of a fool, and is followed by a poem showing the characteristics of a wise man.

The Mûrkhâvalî.

* चन्द्रना सूर्यना सेवको को थया,
भूमी नव ग्रह तथा भक्त जाणो;
मृतकना, माटीना, घाटीना, भाथीना,
हाथीना, व्याघ्रना मन आणो;
शेखना, भेखना, मरदना, मेरीना,
भक्त लाखो दंड शां प्रमाणो;
रत्न कहै यत्नशी भक्तिने दाखवे
भाखवे भिन्न सुक्तिनी माणो.

The *Ātma Vichâr* and *Vairâgyalatâ* are mainly taken
 His philosophical works. up with philosophy and metaphysics.

Haridâs was a Visâ Lâd Bania of Baroda, and was
 Haridâs. working as a steward or servant in
 Premânand's family. Association with
 the poet turned his attention towards learning and poetry
 Premânand's admini- and taking him as his Guru, he succeeded
 - stration of his in obtaining some share of the good
 property. things of literature. He has composed
 about thirteen poetical works. He died during Premâ-
 nand's lifetime, and he having been entrusted with the
 management of his servant's property, gave rich caste
 dinners in his honor after his death and administered it
 to the complete satisfaction of his caste people.

Some of his works are; *Sîtâ Viraha* (A. D. 1666),
 His works. Marriage of Narsinh Mehta's son (A. D.
 1669), *Śrâddha* of Narsinh Mehta's
 father (A. D. 1671) and *Bhâratsâr* (A. D. 1681). It need
 not be said that they are very ordinary, compared, to the
 masterpieces of his Guru, but full of good, descriptive
 passages.

The poem written by Haridâs on the marriage of
Sâmalshâ, the son of Narsinh Mehta, called सामलशानो विवाह,
 appears as if composed by Adhâr Bhat,
 Haridâs' gift of a poem to Adhâr Bhat. a Khedâvâl Brahmin of Broach. It
 has been conjectured that Haridâs after
 writing it, made a present of the poem to this Brahmin,

to enable him to earn his living by reciting it, the gift of the poem being considered a meritorious act.*

Dwârkādâs belonged to the same caste as Haridâs, and was a neighbour of Premânand. Dwârkādâs, He had learned by heart many Bhajans in Gujarati and Hindi, and once Premânand suggested that he too should write some poetry. Vallabh, who happened to be near, in his usual way bantered him, by saying that one might as well expect old women or yokels to write poetry. Premânand took this remark of his son ill, and made up his mind to teach Dwârkādâs how to compose poetry in a week, and by dint of perseverance, was able to get him to write quite presentable verses in a short time. He is said to have written about 25 books, and several Padas including *Krishṇa Līlā*.

Gopāldâs, a native of Surat, has written a work on *Brahma-jñân*, called *Gopāl Gītā*. It is a treatise on Vedantic philosophy in verse, written at Ahmedabad in A. D. 1650. He is the author of miscellaneous verses also on the same subject.†

* See p. 12. Preface to Volume VIII of the *Bṛihat Kṛishṇa Līlāna*.

† Another poet of the same name flourished in A. D. 1570-75. He has written two poems, called the *वल्गुभाष्यान* and the *भक्तिपियूष*. He belonged to a village called *Rupāl* near *Kadi*, and was dumb from his birth. *Gosāinji Vithalnāth*, the son of the great *Vallabhāchārya* happening to see him at the house of a devotee of his—whose daughter was married to him—asked him who he was. On being told of the girl's and her

Dhandās, said to be a native of Dhandhukā, has written two short poems, Bhakta Gītā and Arjun Gītā, the latter of which is well known.

Ratanji, son of Haridās, lived in the Nasik District at Bāglān, and wrote a considerable poem based on an episode in the Mahābhārat, and called it the Ākhyān of Vibramśī Raja. He has versified another incident from the same work, relating to the removal of Draupadī's clothes in the presence of her elders. The former was written in A. D. 1713, and, though long, is not without interest.

A list of about fourteen Jain writers who flourished during this period, is found in a paper contributed by Mansukhlal Kiratchand to the second Gujarati Sāhitya Parishad, but the works of only two are considered here. One is Ānandaghan alias 'Lābh Jain writers. Vijayaji (Samvat year 1687), and the other is Nemivijaya (Samvat year 1700). Ānandaghan and his Choviśī.

The Ānandaghana Choviśī (twenty-four poems of Ānandaghan), is a philosophical treatise, but the the work of Nemivijaya is more popular and interesting. His Śīlavatī (a story of a chaste lady by name Śīlavatī,

husband's misfortune, the Gosāinji put a piece of betel-leaf chewed by him into the mouth of Gopāldās, and it is said that speech came to him. His poems, written at the bidding of the Maharāj and also in recognition of this act of grace, are very popular with the Vaiṣṇavs, and recited in their temples with appropriate music.

which itself means chaste) is a treat in story-telling, and besides that, on account of the peculiar form of Gujarati in which it is written, viz., a mixture of Āpabhramśa, Māgadhi, Mārṇādi, and Śaurseni words and terminations,

Nemivijaya and his
Sīlvatī Rāso.

it furnishes a rich mine for philologists to explore, who can see here very clearly the changes that Gujarati has undergone midway between its origin from Sanskrit and its present form.*

A Rāsā means a story, and Rāsās are written, mostly, rather exclusively by Jains. They furnish very pleasant and instructive reading, and, above all, stir the emotions by their narration of the marvellous. Attainment of one's desires by the recitation of Mantras, procuring of gold by alchemy, the wonderful qualities of gems and precious stones, the out-of-the-way doings of spirits and goblins, flying through the air and such other marvellous things are the staple food of these Rāsā writers. Their purpose is always the inculcation of the principles of religion and morality, for instance, this very poem begins with the praise of chastity. "There is no mountain summit in the world as high as chastity. These are beautiful tales and verses about chaste and pure women."†

* The book is prescribed as a text book for those University students who are reading Gujarati for their M. A. examination.

† शील समो संसारमां, शिखर न कोई थोक,
शीलवंत सतियो तणा, सुंदर कथा शलोक.

The heroine of the story is Śīlavatī and the hero is Chandragupta. He had taken an offence at a remark of his wife before they were married, and soon after marriage, he left her. They remained separate for a very long time, during which Chandragupta met with various adventures, and as a result was able to subdue the elements, control spirits and do various other "uncanny" things, not possible for an ordinary human being to do. During the course of this voluntary exile, he happened to meet a beautiful woman, who opened his eyes to the fact that he had misjudged his wife and condemned her unheard. He felt the truth of her criticism and desired to go back to her. By a strange coincidence, a divine being took him to his wife for a night only on the back of an eagle, and the result of their union, which took place under the influence of a peculiar conjunction of heavenly bodies, was a boy who was endowed with the power of producing one gem from his mouth every day. He was taken away instantaneously by the same agency, fated as he was to continue his career of adventures for several years more. He was always successful and able to rescue several individuals from distress, and win the hand of many princesses. Śīlavatī, on other hand, was condemned by her relatives being suspected of having turned from the path of chastity, and various means were employed to do away with her, such as poison, snake-bite and lastly by leaving her as a prey for wild beasts. But she survived all

Summary of Śīlavatī
Rāso.

that and fell into the hands of a prostitute, in whose house, she gave birth to a child. The prostitute, thinking the child would come in the way of the profession for which she had intended Śīlavatī on account of her beauty gave him to a maid-servant with instructions to destroy him. The servant took him to a temple, and left him there, being unable to make up her mind to lay violent hands on such a beautiful child. The infant was rescued by a rich lady of the place, who brought him up as her foster-son, and on growing up, the boy was able to defeat an invading force of Bhils, the foes of the local ruler, and obtained a gift of several villages. Śīlavatī was told by the prostitute that cats had destroyed her child; horrified at this disaster she left the brothel and found shelter in the house of a Bania.

On returning home, Chandragupta learnt of the plight of his wife, and once more set out to find her. On reaching the place where his son was honoured with Jagirs, he was able to identify him by means of the gem coming out of his mouth, and on making further enquiries was able to find Śīlavatī too. She told him how she had been treated by the prostitute, and how the latter met with her deserts. Their happy reunion came to an end, by the renunciation of the world by both of them, under the advice of a pious saint, Gajadhar Muni.

In this brief outline of the story, the various marvellous incidents, where both the husband and the wife in their adventurous careers, had to grapple with spirits, witches, goblins and wild beasts, and from which in virtue

of the chastity of the latter, they emerged triumphant, are not set out. The poet's delineations of human character where vice in the shape of prostitution and lust, avarice and dishonesty, stalks about are not dilated upon here, Estimate of Nemi-vijaya's work, but in the original they afford a good illustration of the felicity of his style. His fine descriptions of forest scenery too, have not been referred to, while space forbids any lengthy allusion to his sincere solicitude for laying down and inculcating those principles of morality, which dictate practice of mercy towards animals, which insist on truthful speech, which teach the cultivation of the virtues of self-restraint and purity of life. Compared to men like Premānand, Nemivijaya might appear to be a mediocre poet, but amongst those who rank below Premānand he surely holds a very high if not the highest place to which Vallabh might very well lay claims along with him.

As a poet who makes story-telling his task Nemivijaya might not improperly stand as a rival of Sāmal and share the honours with him.

Reference has already been made to the part taken by Parsis in the development of early Gujarati literature* It seems the ball set A Parsi poet.

* Page 14, *ante*. In the Kārtik (Samvat year 1970) issue of "The Vasant," Mr. N. B. Divatia quotes some instances of prose written by Parsis in the fourteenth century. He quotes some more instances from later works (A. D. 1415); one of them is the *Arda Virāf Nāmeh*, which was copied out by Behram Lakhmidhar in Samvat year 1507. As a

rolling so early as the fourteenth century continued to increase in motion steadily, and in the seventeenth century we meet with a poet, who instead of producing translations of religious books from Pehalavi or Zend into Sanskrit and from Sanskrit into the vernacular of the province, chose to write on an original theme. This poet was a Parsi priest, by name Erwad Rustam Peshotan, a native of Surat. He belonged to a priestly family, as his immediate ancestors were either Mobeds or Erwads. Out of four works written by him, hardly one is concerned with a religious theme, pure and simple. They are all Nâmehs (i e., chronicles or biographies). The Zarthosht Nâme (A. D. 1676), the Siyâvakśa Nâme (A. D. 1680), the Virâf Nâme, and the Aspandiyâr Nâme, are narrations in verse of the incidents in the lives of the distinguished personages, whose names the poems bear. The second of these four has been edited by a coreligionist of the poet, well known for his

Description of his
work.

literary work, Erwad Tehmuras Dinshâ Anklesaria. The work is based on that portion of the Shâh Nâme of the great Persian poet, Firdausi Tûsi, which deals with the adventures of Prince Siyâvakśa, the son of Kai Kâvus. There is necessarily a mixture of fact and fable in the

specimen of the prose prevalent then, a couple of sentences are given here from a larger extract published by Mr. Divatiâ. १००० जोट समसांहणी। तेवत एक सहस्र जोटनी समस्याणनी दगत समस्याण बलतू ह्इ ३ त्रन वेहेत भूम छांडीइ ताह आतस तल्लि जात कीजइ.

Gujarati poem just as there is in the Shâh Nâmeh. In fact, the charm of this poem lies in its romance, in its description of marvels and unusual events. One could trace in them a similarity to the poems of Sâmal in this respect. But still the work has an individuality of its own. Even at present, Parsis speak and write Gujarati, but they have managed to impress upon it a peculiarity of their own. Certain ideas, phrases, idioms, turns of language and of thought have made their Gujarati almost into a special dialect of the language. The same thing is found in the Siyâvakśa Nâmeh. The poet is saturated with the religious and social ideas of his own community; the vehicle which he uses to convey them is no doubt Gujarati, but it is Gujarati clothed in an unfamiliar garb. Sanskrit and Gujarati words form the groundwork, but the superstructure is composed of Zend, Pehalavi and Persian words and phrases which makes it difficult for an ordinary Gujarati to follow and appreciate the beauty of the verses. Indeed but for the lucid annotations of the editor, it would have been an uphill task for any one to understand the work fully.

The poet knew several languages, Persian, Avesta, Pehalavi, Sanskrit, and Gujarati. He knew his own religion and literature very well, that goes without saying, but he seems to have studied Sanskrit literature and the manners and customs of his Hindu neighbours as well. His description of the beauty of the women of ancient Irân, and their ornaments, reads like one borrowed from a Sans-

His knowledge of
several languages,

krit work,* and his description of a Persian banquet, is more like the description of a Gujarati Hindu's dinner than of one partaken by a follower of Zarthosht in prehistoric Irân.† Besides these there are many passages where we find an assimilation of Hindu manners and customs in the life of his heroes and heroines and other characters.

* तम सीश फुल पुनम चंद ने अमाशी सूर ।
 ए वेरांन रांणमां एथी घणुं वरशे छे नूर ॥
 तम नीडाळ टीक बुध वहरेस्पत शुकर जडी ।
 तम नाशका नथ ते सबचेराग कोणे घडी ॥
 तम कान कूंडल जडेआ जाणे मांणक ने मोते ।
 कोट अमरण पेहेरावेआं आप धणीए पोते ॥
 कर चूड पोहोंची जाणे वीज चमक चमकीने जाए ।
 पाए पेजण ते नेवरनो जड्ढकारज थाए ॥

Your head ornament is like the full moon and the bright sun on the *Amāvāsyā* day (the last day of the dark half of a month), and it rains a flood of light in this desert. Your *Tik* or *Tili* (a forehead ornament) is set with planets, like Mercury, Jupiter and Venus. Your nose ring is like the fabulous gem, which gives light at night (*Shabcherâg*). Who could have made it? Your ear ornaments (*kundal*) are set with rubies and pearls, and the ornaments on your throat seem to have been put on by the Lord himself. The bangles (*Chud* and *Pohonchi*) on your arms flash like lightning, and the ornaments on your feet tinkle.

† खाजां लाडु जलेबी घेवरज छे सार ।
 मेवा मीठाई खुआन भरी मरी मेलेआं तेआर ॥
 एकशेट शारण तांहां बासेट हुआ पलेव ।
 माखण धीही तावेआं तांहां खाणमां ओशाई जीणी शेव ॥
 शाल दाल परीशी तांहां उपर धीहीनी नालज दीधी ।
 जनशाजनशी अचार तेहेनी एम वेवखज कीधी ॥

Altogether the work would be found on a close perusal
and of contemporary interesting from several points of view;
Hindu manners and literary, in so far as it introduces into
customs.
Gujarati at a very early stage, the
methods of Persian chroniclers, thus creating a land mark
in its history; philological, as it still retains several quaint
forms of old Gujarati words; and social, in so far as it
records the imbibing by the Parsi community of the man-
ners, customs, superstitions and ideas of the Hindus with
whom they lived.

CHAPTER VI.

POETS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The next period (1700 to 1800 A. D.) saw the rise in Gujarat of the Maratha power, and what with the declining influence of the Moghuls, and the increasing predatoriness of the hordes from the Deccan, peace was not to be for Gujarat. The rule of the Gâikwâr at Baroda did not ensure quiet. In fact there was no central authority in the province to ensure peace, and it was not a rare sight to meet with tax-gatherers of three or four powers at a time, the Moghul's, the local Nawab's or petty Chief's, the Gâikwâr's and the Peshwâ's, swooping down upon the unhappy villagers and terrorising them into payment. Consequently, we miss that brightness in the literary production of this century which illumined the days of the three premier poets. The production is poor. Mr. Tripathi calls it "imbecile."* It certainly is, at any rate, sectarian, if one could use that term to denote work which came from the pen of the devotees of the different gods and goddesses, each in praise of his own patron or patroness, Vishṇu or Krishṇa or Śiva or Ambâ.

* "Some twelve poets directly or indirectly attached to this new faith (of the Vallabhacharyas) supply the country during this period, with an imbecile kind of poetry, where we generally miss the vigour and philosophy of Narsinh as well as the gentle purity of Mirân." The Classical Poets of Gujarat.

The goddess Ambâ represents the female element, impersonates the might of God and as such is worshipped as the mother in nature.

Goddess represents female element in nature.

She is known and addressed by various names, but the central principle of the representation of motherhood in her person is never lost sight of. Her terrible aspect as the avenger, the killer of demons, as the rejoicer in carnage and blood, as one who could be appeased by means of sacrifices only, as the representative of nature "red in tooth and claw" is forgotten in the the tenderer and kindlier feelings of a mother towards her children, and in invocations to her, we always find more prominence given to the humane side of her nature rather than the fierce one.

The Garbâs of Vallabh Bhat (A. D. 1700), all of them addressed to her, have acquired more than an ephemeral popularity. He himself was a very sincere devotee of the Mâtâ (mother, goddess), and even now his name is perpetuated along with another devotee (said to be his brother), by name Dholâ, in the cry with which her followers greet one another in her temple, "Vallabh Dholâ Ki Jai"—Victory to Vallabh and Dholâ. He lived in Chunvâl, famous as the seat of the worship of Becharâji or Becharâ Mâtâ. He came from Ahmedabad, and was a Bhat Mevâdâ by caste and is therefore known as Vallabh Bhat.

Vallabh Bhat.

In Gujarat, there are two or three celebrated seats of the goddess, the most famous being at Ârâsur, the next one in Chunvâl, and

Seats of the goddess.

the third one on the hill of Pāvāgadh near Châmpâner. All these seats have their own legends, and their special followers of both sexes. They are popular with the middle as well as the lower classes, like the Bhils and Kolis; and the Garbâs of Vallabh Bhat include a descriptive chronicle of all these seats. The singer or reciter, admires the powers of the goddess, her beauty, her dress, her ornaments and winds up with solicitations for her favour. An exact

Nature of Garbâ
literature.

counter-part to this kind of literature in Gujarat, the curious reader will find in Bengal, where poet after poet of the early and middle era of the Bengali verse literature, has sung of Kâli almost always as a mother and protector and very rarely as a destroyer. The first nine days of the month of Âświn are specially set apart for the worship of the goddess, and it is during this period that the singing of these Garbâs is most indulged in, in Kathiawad by men and in Gujarat by women. It is a pretty sight to see the women moving in a circle beating time with the rhythmic claps of their hands, and bending half down, singing these Garbâs late into the night, at places like Surat, Baroda, Ahmedabad and Bombay. These dances are more graceful than those of the men, who merely jump and skip and shout and yell, and clap their hands.

Vallabh has written of Krishna too, and he has written a Garbâ on the Kalikâl (the iron age). Vallabh's description of the present age. He laments the signs which betoken this unhappy age, and invokes the help of the goddess to

purge the world of it. He says "even before her age, a girl becomes a woman, O Bahuchari, and often bears children." He describes the scarcity and famine of Samvat years 1787 and 1788 (A. D. 1731). "Grain had become very dear, and irreligion had increased beyond all bounds. How was one to judge of the actions of the other when each

Hardships of one exceeded the other in committing
famine, excesses. Those who were brought forth from their loins and womb, and who shared of the element of both (parents), had to be abandoned for the sake of the stomach, and children had to be sold away." "Send us, O mother, therefore (all) the rains we want, so that we may not lack bounteous crops. Pour only a drop of your nectar, on us, your children, on the cattle and on our village."*

His Garbo on "An ill-matched pair" (कजाहुँ), a young and miseries of an or child-wife, and an old husband, with ill-matched couple. one foot in the grave is, however, a most enjoyable piece of poetry; nothing like it is met with in the

* वय विना वनिता वेषमां, हो बहुचरी, गर्भज धरे अनेक,
* * * * *
अज अति मोषां हुवे, हो बहुचरी, अधर्म व्याप्यो असाध्य,
को कोनी करणी जुवे, हो बहुचरी, एक थकी एक अगाध.
उदरथकी उपजावीआं, हो बहुचरी, उभय तणो जे अंश,
ते तन पेट तजावीआं, हो बहुचरी, विक्रय कीधो वंश.
* * * * *
म्हो मांग्या मेघ मोकलो, हो बहुचरी, खट रस नावे खोट,
आई अमि छांटो नांखीए, हो बहुचरी, छोरु ढोरु ने गाम.

early period of Gujarati verse. Every line in it tells, and the miseries of a girl approaching womanhood married to an old man daily growing more decrepit, are so graphically described, that no apology is needed for making an extract from it to show that nearly three centuries ago the thoughtful men of the land were alive to the evils of such marriages. A young wife lays the whole blame of this uneven match on the goddess-mother (ગોરમા) and prays to her never to repeat the mistake again.

“O mother, you have given me an old husband, and thereby ruined my whole life. How much should I blame you? O mother, I am but a child, and he is grown up and old. O mother, his very sight terrifies me. He is a fool and an idiot. O mother, my youth is blossoming and hence I look beautiful and my husband is like a mummy. O mother, he is soft-headed, hideous and worn out. O mother, I am exactly sixteen and he is eighty. O mother, in appearance, he looks like a demon with all his senses gone. O mother, on a winter night one likes to indulge in many pleasures, but O mother, an old fool (like him) acts as if he were a dumb creature. O mother, I want to enjoy myself at night and therefore anoint my eye with collyrium and he threatens me, stick in hand, with a beating. O mother, every word he utters is a grumble, how is his nature to be changed? O mother, my husband is aged, how can he gratify my desires? O mother, the nine days sacred to goddess Mátáji are very pleasant. O mother, on the tenth or Daserá day every one is in holiday attire but my hus-

band in so weak and ugly that I feel ashamed of him. . . . O mother, while every one is enjoying the festive days of the Diváli, to me they are the flames of the Holi fire. I am unlucky, I have nothing to hope for. . . . O mother, while my hair is black, his head has become grey. O mother, I am in the bloom of youth but my whole life is blasted. He dribbles at the mouth, his eyes water. When I bespread the bed with flowers he begins to weep. O mother, why was I not strangled at my birth, why was I not poisoned? O mother, my husband is dying. I feel as if I would become a *Sati*. O mother, I entreat you with folded hands that in future give me a husband with the vigor of youth.”*

(गोरमा, तूने पूज्येश्वर आय के घर घरओ मन्थ्यो रे लोल;)

* गोरमा, घरडो के भरधार के आप्यो मुजने रे, लोल;
गोरमा, धिक्क कीधो अवतार के शुं कहुं तुजने रे, लोल.

* * * * *

गोरमा, हुं तो न्हातुं बाळ के, ए म्होटो बुडीओ रे, लोल;
गोरमा, दीठेथी पडे फाळ के, मुख मुडीओ रे, लोल.
गोरमा, मारुं थयुं जोवन के, पियु वरवो थयो रे, लोल;
गोरमा, घेलो कद्रुपवान के, जाते वही गयो रे, लोल.
गोरमा, सोळ वरस प्रत्यक्ष, के एने हेंसी थयां रे, लोल;
गोरमा, दीसंतो जाणे जक्ष, के बुध सघळी गई रे, लोल.
गोरमा, शियाळानी रात के, स्वाद होये घणारे, लोल;
गोरमा, मुख घरडी जात, के जेवो गुंगणो रे, लोल.
गोरमा, रजनी रमैवा इच्छुं, के थुंजुं आंखडी रे, लोल;
गोरमा, मारीश करतो बोले, के एक कर लाखी रे, लोल.
गोरमा, गाळ नीसरे वाते, के स्वभाव केम फरे रे, लोल;

From the opening line of the poem it appears that this
 The unhappy wife a unhappy child-wife belonged to the Nâgar
 Nâgar Brahmin. Brahmin caste, the most cultured and
 advanced community in Gujarat and Kathiawad.

Dwârko (A. D. 1710) belonged to a village in Cha-
 rotar called Bhâlej though he passed his
 Dwârko. life in Dâkore. His verses are not
 many and they concern the life of Krishṇa. Some of his
 didactic verses are however simple and effective. He says,
 “Be warned, while there is time. When will you again get

गोरमा, पीउनी घरडी जाते, के अर्थ क्यांथी सरे रे, लोल.
 गोरमा, घरमां नवरात्रीना दिन, के घणा सोहामणा रे, लोल;
 गोरमा, विजया केरो दिन, के सहु शणगारमां रे, लोल.
 गोरमा, दुरबळ मारो कंथ, के घणो लजामणो रे, लोल;
 * * * * *
 गोरमा, सहुने मन दीवाळी, के मारे मन हुताशणी रे, लोल.
 गोरमा, मारा करमना भोग, के हुंतो निराशणी रे, लोल;
 * * * * *
 गोरमा, मारा काळा केश, के ए आखो पळ्यो रे, लोल.
 गोरमा, हुं थई जोबन वेश, के जनमारो बळ्यो रे, लोल;
 गोरमा, म्होडेथी चुए लाल, के आंखे पाणी गळे रे, लोल.
 * * * * *
 गोरमा, सेजे बीछातुं पुष्प, के ए देखीने रुवे रे, लोल;
 * * * * *
 गोरमा, जणतां न दीधी फांसी, के वीख दई मारती रे, लोल.
 * * * * *
 गोरमा, पीउजी सुता मरवा, के जाणे थाळं सती रे, लोल.
 गोरमा, कर जोडी लातुं पाय, के देजो सम्रथ धणी रे, लोल.

an occasion to be warned? Youth will flash past, age will come apace. Then your strength will
 His didactic verses. flee, you will be a tottering old man.
 Mâyâ (delusion of the world) has blind-folded you and you do not see anything. . . . Dwârko therefore tells you to remember and to pray to Râma, lest all be lost.*

Bhâṇadâs has in his Hastâmalak (A. D. 1721) in the form of a dialogue between Śankarâ-
 Bhâṇadâs. chârya and a stupid looking Brahmin boy, Hastâmalak, discussed several questions of Vedantism. Hastâmalak was really an avatâr of Parabrahma the Supreme Being and he has explained to Śankar the principles of Adwaitism, Dwaitaism, (Monism, Dualism) &c.

Kâlidâs, (about A. D. 1725-1730), a Nâgar Brahmin of Vasâvad in Kathiawad, is best known
 Kâlidâs, by his Prahlâdâkhyân though he has written other works called the Sitâ Swayamvar, the Dhruvâkhyân, the Iśvar Vivâh, and also several poems in praise of Śakti (goddess) whose follower he was. The story of Prahlâd, the child-devotee of Viṣṇu is well-known. He was born in the family of a demon, Hiraṇya Kaśipu (हिरण्यकशिपु) by

* चेती ले चेत्याનો अवसर, फरी फरी क्यां मळशे रे;
 जोबन जातां वार न लागे, जरा आवीने ढळशे रे.
 ढळशे त्यारे नहि रहे धारण, थर थर काया धुजे रे;
 मायानी अंधारी नांखी, तेमां काई नव सुझे रे.

* * * * *

कहे द्वारको राम भजी लो, नहि तो जाशो हारी रे.

name, a great foe of Vishṇu. His brother was killed by the god and so he had vowed vengeance on him, but the god escaped him once by making himself invisible. Thereafter by severe austerity and penance, the demon made himself immortal by getting a boon from Brahmá,

and his Prahládâ-
khyân. which rendered him immune from destruction by anything created or born in the ordinary way, at morning, evening

or night, and by any weapon whatsoever. He was, further protected from death either on the earth, or in the sky or at sea. Prahlád, his son, was a follower of Hari, and in spite of the demon-like education by which he wanted to instil into him a hatred for Vishṇu, he found the boy drifting more and more towards the worship of his foe. He tried to terrorise him into giving up the worship. Though he tortured him, and almost killed him, his son was adamant. At last Hiraṇya gave Prahlád an ultimatum that unless he showed his god to his father he would be killed. So, one day, Hiraṇya stood over his son, dagger in hand, and demanded a sight of Vishṇu under pain of death. The boy was told to produce his cherished god from a pillar near,* and strange to say, on the boy invoking his presence, the pillar split with a loud crash and a strange figure, half man half lion, (Nara-sinh) presented

* This threat to the boy begins with the celebrated verses, "Boy, show me, show me, your Lord of the heaven (Vishṇu)."

बाळा, देखाड देखाड तारो वैकुंठ पति.

itself to the eyes of the tyrant. Nothing daunted, he began to fight with him and had his stomach torn or ripped open by the claws of this man-beast. This happened at a time which was neither evening nor night, i. e., at twilight hour, and he was killed on a doorsill, which was neither earth nor sky nor water. Thus the boon was evaded and the tyrant killed. The narrative is full of vigor, and is told in simple language, which sustains very well the interest of the reader making the poem popular.

Trikamdâs, a Nâgar Brâhmin of Junâgadh (A. D. 1734)

Trikamdâs. was more a politician than a literary man.

His poems on Dâkorenâth and Rukminî Vivâh have not yet been published.

Pritamdâs (A. D. 1730) was a Bhât of Sandeshar in

Pritamdâs the Kaira district and often lived at

Nadiad. As a rule the Bhât community is illiterate, and although at one time considered to represent the Poet-laureates of native courts, its members have now come down to the position of menials. The more is the credit due to this poet, that being born in such a community and having very little intercourse with either learned men or learned languages, he has left behind him works, many of which are held to be popular to-day and often sung by the masses. Of his domestic life, only this much is authentically known that

belonged to an illiterate class. his first wife, who was his senior by two years, had made his life miserable by her sharp temper, and that whenever

any storms disturbed his domestic tranquillity, he always

used to employ himself in writing devotional songs to Kṛishṇa, instead of answering back, till the storm had blown over. At times he used to leave the house to his wife and

His domestic life. go away on a pilgrimage to Dākore, where he was always welcomed by the priests, who delighted in listening to his verses. His second wife was a better woman. But his last years were clouded with much unhappiness, he became blind and he lost his wife when he was seventy two. Even then he did not abandon his favourite pursuit, and often-times did his pupils, if they happened to be near, take down his verses as they fell *impromptu* from his mouth.

Pritamdās was a great believer in the good influence that comes to a man through his Gûrû. Good influence of his Gûrû. He ascribed all his good work to his Gûrû Govindrâm, whom he met at Nadiad, and great was his grief when he left him after eleven years of constant intercourse. A large portion of his poetry is founded on this text.*

His works are. 1. The Sâras Gîtâ (A. D. 1764) an episode in the life of Kṛishṇa, (2). The Pritamdās' works, Jnân Kakko (A. D. 1776) verses on religious knowledge each beginning with a letter of the

* सद्गुरुने शब्दे रे, सउ तिरथ तेहने रे.

i. e., he who has got the word (direction or instruction) of a good Gûrû has got in himself all the places of pilgrimage. (The word of a virtuous teacher, is enough to win salvation which is attained by travelling to different holy places.)

alphabet, 3. Gûrû Mahimâ (greatness of Gûrûs) and 4. Jnân Mâs (1781-83). Besides these he has written verses on the birth of Krishṇa, Bhakti Prakâś, Jnân Prakâś, Bhagavad Gîtâ, Adhyâtma Râmâyaṇ, Jnân Gîtâ, Krishṇa Lîlâ and numerous Padas and Garbis.

They are naturally divided into two parts, those relating to Śringâr (love) and those relating to Vairâgya (freedom from worldly attachments) or Jnân (knowledge). Both have secured a hold on the minds of the people of Gujarat.

He says, "your body will be of no use to you even though you try to preserve it in innumerable ways. Even if you cut the purest of gold and eat it, when the time comes, the body will perish in a moment."*

"The way of God is the way for the brave, cowards are not wanted therein. You have first to sacrifice your head (dedicate your whole being) and then remember God. He who offers to Him, his son, his wealth, his wife and his head, will be able to enjoy the sweets (of devotion)†.

"Know this that the happiness of the world is like a

Extracts from his
verses.

* काया रे तारी काम न आवे, जो करे कोटी उपाय रे,
वणशी जातां वार नहि लागे, जो कुंदन कापीने खाय रे.

† हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो, नहि कायरनुं काम जोने;
परथम पहेलुं मस्तक मूकी, बळती लेखुं नाम जोने,
सुत वीत दारा शीश समरपे, ते पामे रस पीबा जोने.

dew drop, it is a fact that it will disappear in a moment, therefore, remember God, O Pritam and be purified.'''*

Out of a great number of Padas composed by him illustrating the adventures of Krishṇa in his childhood the under-noted four or five are very often on the lips of women.

(1) हे जसोदाजी, आवडो लाडकवायो लाल न कीजे.

O Jasodā do not spoil your child so much.

(2) हे वांसलडी वेरण थई लागी रे, ब्रजनी नारने.

O flute, you have become an enemy—a disturber of the peace—of the women of Vraj, (when Krishṇa plays on you).

This whole poem so graphically expresses the feelings of the women of Vraj, envying the flute because it is pressed by the lips of Krishṇa, that it is quoted below in full.†

* जगतनुं सुख झाकळनुं छे पाणी रे, जाणी ले,
वणशी जातां वार नहि, सत वाणी रे, जाणी ले;
प्रीतम प्रभुने भजीने, पावन थाजे रे, जाणी ले.

† हे वांसलडी, वेरण थई लागी रे, ब्रजनी नारने,
तुं शोर करे, जातलडी तारी रे, मन विचारने.

हे वांसलडी०—१

तैं एवडां कामण शां कीधां ?

श्यामलीए मुख चुंबन लीधां,

मन ब्रजवासीनां हरी लीधां,

हे वांसलडी०—२

तुने कोड करी कृष्णे झाली,

गौ नाद सूणी आवी चाली,

तुं विश्वंभरने बहु बहाली.

हे वांसलडी०—३

पूरत तुं काई नथी लावी,

उघाडे छोणे छे आवी,

भगवान तणे मन बहु भावी.

हे वांसलडी०—४

(3) मन मोहनलाल, मारगढो मुको तो मथुरा अइए.

O thou, who hast charmed our hearts, move out of the way, so that we may go to Mathurā.

(4) हरी भजनथकी, छोटा होए ते लौथी मोटा थार.

By the worship of (Hari) God, he who is lowest becomes highest.

Śivānand was a Nāgar Brahmin of Surat, (A. D. 1744), and he has confined himself exclusively to the singing of the praises of Śiva or Mahādev. He became a Sannyāsi late in life and his Ārtis (songs) are chanted with zest, at the time the god is worshipped in the evening with a lamp waved before or in front of the idol to the accompaniment of the music of kettle and his Ārtis.

ते व्रत व्रतादिक शुं कीधुं ?

राधा थकी मान अधिक लोधुं,

हूँने आलींगन प्रभुए दीधुं. हे वांसलडी.—५

“O flute, you have become an enemy of the women of Vraj. You are blustering, just consider your origin. (1)

What charms have you thrown on him that the Dark One (Krishṇa) kisses you with his lips? You have captivated the hearts of the residents of Vraj, O flute. (2)

Krishṇa has taken hold of you with love, the cows hearing your strains have come running. You are very dear to the Lord of the Universe, O flute. (3)

You have brought no dowry with you, you have come boldly and publicly, yet Krishṇa has taken a great liking for you, O flute. (4)

What fasts have you observed that you have taken a place higher than Rādhā? God himself has taken you in his arms, O flute. (5)

drums and bells. All his poems are modelled on the style of the followers of Vishṇu or Krishṇa, who have not left a single incident in the daily routine of the life of their god unsung, such as his bath, his dinner, his dress and his amours. Some of these poems are in Hindi or Vraj.

Narbherām who died at the great age of eighty-four (in Samvat year 1908, A.D. 1852) was a Narbherām. Modh Brahmin of Pihij, a small village in the Petlād Taluka of H. H. the Gâikwâr's territory. His Gûrû was one Chhotâlâl, who taught him to write such verses as could be sung on festive occasions, in praise of Krishṇa or Ranchhod Râiji, the presiding deity of the famous temple at Dâkore. He passed his whole life in worshipping Krishṇa either at Dâkore or Dwârkâ, and in writing poems in praise of him whom he adored. They amount to about twenty in number, and some of them describe autobiographical incidents. For instance, once while going to Dâkore, he was robbed of all he possessed. He went to a village near, Panosarâ by name, where the

How faith helped
him.

villagers were so moved by his losses, those of such a sincere devotee of Krishṇa, that they started a subscription list and repaid him many times over what he had lost. Another time, while on a pilgrimage to Dwârkâ, the officers on the bank of the Gomti asked him for the tax or toll which each pilgrim has to pay before being allowed to bathe in the sacred waters. He said he was unable to pay and instead of the money presented the officers with a

short poem in which he told the deity that he had nothing to pay, "the oil seed had no oil in it", and that he should be allowed to go free. The officers were so pleased with it that they allowed him to bathe tax free.* Once when he was very dangerously ill in his sixty-ninth

* નાણું આપે નરમો રે, વાવરજો છોગાळा,
 ગાંઠ બાંધજો તાળી રે, ધોઢી ધજાવાळा,
 કપડી કેશવ જાણત તો, શાને આવત પચાશ જોજન,
 સાંમઢ્યું શ્રવણે, સાધુને છાપે છે, માટે મઢવા ધણું મન,
 દરશન ઢોને રે, દૂર કરી પાळा.
 મેઢ દેઢીને નજર નથી કરતા, છાપ આપો છો હરિ,
 પાઢઢી માઢી છાપ ઢાવી છઢિલા, પરિક્ષા તો ંવી કરી,
 સમઢ્યા લેજો સમજી રે, જે કહી કાનઢ કાळा,
 હારો છો જનથી નથી હરવાતા, માટે હરિ ! હઢ મેલ,
 કહે નરમો છોદ્દાલાલ પ્રતાપે, નથી ંતલમાં તેલ,
 લેવાનું મુજ પાસે રે, હરિ હરિ જપમાळा.

(He says ironically) Narbho will pay you money Krishna, and you may spend it. Tie the knot of your money bag firmly, you whose ensign is a white banner. If I knew Krishna to be deceitful, why should I have come so many miles. I had heard that the Sâdhus were given the seal impressions (of શંઢ, ચક્ર, ગદા, પદ્મ, free), and hence my mind was made up to see you. Therefore, remove your guards and let me visit you. When you see a man dressed as an ascetic, you brand the seal on him without delay. But seeing me dressed in a turban, you prevent my getting the stamp. Is this the way in which you discriminate between your devotees? O dark deity, understand the problem I have put before you. You are not defeated, you allow yourself to be defeated by your devotees, therefore, Hari, leave aside your obstinacy. Narbho says, by the grace of Chhotâlâl, that this oil-seed has no oil in it. What is to be taken from me is the rosary with the beads of which I repeat Hari, Hari.

year and was on his death-bed, he composed two poems narrating his faith in Krishna. The last one shows that he died at Gomtipur near Ahmedabad.

The story as to how the god of Dwârkâ was brought to Dâkore in Gujarat, is that an individual of a very humble origin Bodâñâ and his wife found it very hard, as they were very poor, to travel every year to Dwârkâ to pay their respects to Krishna. They therefore prayed to him to come to their place, and be installed there. They were so devoted to him that they grew the Tulsi (black basil) plant on the palm of their hands, and thus propitiated him. With great caution, Krishna evaded the strict surveillance of his keepers at Dwârkâ, who were naturally loth to allow their only source of income to fall into other hands. The distance from Dwârkâ to Dâkore was immense, and the only means of conveyance was a dilapidated cart with a famished team of bullocks, that could hardly cover a mile an hour. But Krishna was bent upon executing his plan and working a miracle: he managed to reach Dâkore in a very short time. The local priests of Dwârkâ, the Gugali Brahmins, pursued him closely, and the image had to be thrown into the Gomti—a namesake of the river at Dwârkâ—to avoid its falling back into the hands of the infuriated mob from Kathiawad. It was subsequently recovered from there as Krishna made a compromise with the Brahmins, and it is now installed in the famous shrine at Dâkore,

How the image of
Krishna was carried
away from Dwârkâ
to Dâkore.

which attracts on every full moon day, tens of thousands of devotees from Gujarat. In celebration of this persistent faith of Bodāṇā and his wife, which secured for Gujarat the residence of a deity worshipped over the whole of India, the poet has written several short Padas (about 600) which he calls "verses of the moustaches of Bodāṇā" (बोदाणानी मूळनां पदो), meaning that Bodāṇā was able to twirl his moustaches like a hero, he having done a most patriotic deed—spiritually of course. In fact, he calls him the saviour of Gujarat. He names him in the same breath with the spiritual celebrities of India, like Pundarik, Shuk, Bhagirath and Narsinh Mehta. Pundarik kept the god at his house. Shuk recited the Bhāgavat in a way which was like nectar in its effect, Bhagirath brought the Ganges down from the heavens to the earth, and Narsinh Mehta's power over Krishna is already known. In prowess he compares him to Balirājā, to Hariśchandra, to Brahmā, to Surya, to Indra. These Padas are worth a perusal.

Haridās (A. D. 1774) was a Kśatriya by caste and born at Kuntalpur (Kutiāṇā) near Junagadh. He was a protégé of Divan Ranchhodji who had given him employment. He has written the "Śiva Vivāh" and several Vedantic Padas and they are recited by Sādhus and ascetics near Kutiāṇā and Bardā. His language is provincial Gujarati, full of Urdu words, the latter testifying to the Mahomedan influence at that time rampant in Saurāstra.

Another poet of the same name has written *Kālikā Mâtā* no Garbo, in which is described the legend of the goddess having destroyed Patai Raja and his kingdom, for his having tried to violate her chastity.

Govindrām (A. D. 1781-1814) was an Audich Brahmin of a small town called Âmod near Broach. He has written on the evils obtaining in this sinful age of Kali, like Vallabh, but his verses are more effective. Every line is effective. He first describes the evil practices of the Brahmins, who had taken to drinking and forgetting their exalted office, had elected to serve the inferior classes, selling their daughters in marriage and performing many other improper deeds. He, then, passes on to the Ksatriyas who also had abandoned their duty of protecting the cow, the Brahmin and the Sâdhu. Instead, they had taken to thieving, robbing and scandal-mongering. The Vaiśyas had run away from their duties. Some of them killed their daughters in infancy, lacking the wherewithal for their marriage. They kept false weights, in the name of Krishna committed fornication, and followed false gûrûs. The Śudras also had forgone their duties. Contrary to all expectations they had posed as gûrûs, and some had begun to mutter some words into the ears of others and claim money for that, while others had begun to lead immoral lives with their sisters, daughters and daughters-in-law. Wives of sons quarrelled with their husband's mothers, and husbands

His verses deal with
the evils of this age,

took sides with their wives and abused their mothers. On the other hand, wives thrashed their husbands and favored other men and the men allowed their wives to order them about. They washed their clothes and cooked for them. Brothers quarrelled with brothers for mere trifles. Krishna had anticipated this state of things in the Bhagavad Gîtâ, and told Arjuna that he would appear amongst them when such irreligion would prevail, to reform them.

There are other poems written by him but they are all couched in the same style, satirizing the hypocrisy and vices of the times.

In a short piece he has described the rare event in the annals of modern Hinduism, of the conversion of a Mahomedan to Vaishnavism. by name to the tenets of the Vallabh sect or Vaishnavism at the hands of Vallabhâchârya. The convert is one of the eighty four well-known followers of this Sampradâya (cult).

Udayaratna, a Jain poet of this period (Samvat year 1769, A. D. 1713) has been selected out of about twenty four or five of Jain poets, to show what kind of poetry they wrote. He wrote at Cambay, Pâtan, and other places, and his verses on the Nine Hedges of Virtue or continence on the part of males, are about the most popular in Gujarati literature. Virtue according to him is to be protected from a lapse, by nine hedges, in the shape of abstention from certain temptations. The first

And the conversion of a
Mahomedan to
Vaishnavism.

Udayaratna,

a type of Jain
writers.

hedge is, that a man who wishes to remain virtuous should not live in a place where women live. *Nine Hedges of Virtue.* However careful a rat is, it is in danger if a cat be near. Similarly for one wishing to remain chaste, there is a chance of his fall, if he lives near women. The second hedge is the avoidance of even a talk with women. Just as by seeing a lemon at a distance, the mouth begins to water, so a virtuous man might slip if he were even to exchange a word with the opposite sex. The third hedge is, that he should not even sit where women usually sit, that is, on cots, sofas, etc. The poet says if you mix pumpkin with moistened and kneaded flour, the dough loses its flavour. Similarly if you enjoy sitting on soft couches and sofas (used by women) you are likely to endanger your virtue. The fourth is, that you should not look at the fair sex. If you look long at the sun you injure your eyesight. So, if you look at women, you lose your strength of mind. The fifth hedge is, avoiding the place where you can hear even the tinkling of their bangles, places like wells, and ponds (which women frequent for fetching water). If you enclose butter and wax in a pot and place them near fire, they are sure to melt. Even so, the sound of women's voice would melt the virtue of a man. Sixthly, you must taboo even the remembrance of any good times you might have passed with them, before you took the vow of chastity. If you place a bundle of hay over fire, it brightens up. So, remembrance of past pleasures stirs up similar thoughts. Seventhly, all exciting foods

should be eschewed as they feed the passions. Eighthly, avoid over-eating, eat very sparingly. If in a pot which could hold one pound of grain only, you put two pounds, cover it and place it on fire, the cover is sure to fly off, on account of pressure from within. So, overeating has the danger of removing the lid of continence. The ninth prohibition is against indulgence in fashionable dressing, use of cosmetics etc. There is one last general behest given in these words. "Do not travel alone with a woman, do not talk (with her) on the road, even two men should not sleep on one bed, nor should one easily be moved to use abusive language. A daughter aged six and a half, and a son aged seven, should not sleep with her father and his mother, in the same bed."

Ratno, belonging to the humble class of dyers at Kaira, has written in Samvat year 1795,

Ratno.

A. D. 1739, on the laments of the Gopis at their bereavement from Krishṇa, and Jivrām Bhat of Dholkâ near Ahmedabad, has imitated the Vivek Vanjhârâ of Premânand in his travels of Jivrâj Śeth. Jivarâj makes a voyage to dispose of his merchandise. The perils of the sea are described: at last he reaches the harbour. He begins his task of disposing of his goods. He seeks and obtains a wife Nivritti and she bears him a son and a daughter. His career closes. The poem is an allegory: Jivrâj is the soul—his journey and anxieties is the search

Jivrām Bhat and his
allegorical poem.

for bliss. The wife is meditation, the fruit of the union is Jnân, knowledge, and Bhakti, devotion. The successful issue of the venture is absorption into Śivrâj, the divinity. These verses he wrote in Samvat year 1800, A. D. 1744.

Mâdhavdâs, son of Sundardâs (A. D. 1721), was a Valmiki Kâyastha of Surat. In simple language he has written the Daśam Skandha, the Rûmîṇî Haraṇ, and the Okhâ Haraṇ. The poems are, however, devoid of spirit.

CHAPTER VII.

POETS OF THE (FIRST HALF OF THE)
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

There are some poets born in the eighteenth century, the dates of whose works however over-
 Prevailing note of the last period continued in this century, lap it and hence they are considered as belonging to the next century. The division is merely chronological as we do not find any sharp dividing lines; the first half of the nineteenth (A. D. 1800 to 1850) may be taken to be merely a continuation of the eighteenth century, so far as the prevailing note of the literature is concerned. It is proposed to treat only of the first half of the century here, because, towards the middle or rather end of that half, English education began to be imparted to the youths of the province, and a beginning was made which has revolutionised the literature of Gujarat as it has done elsewhere in India. In the first half of the century then, the followers of
 excepting in two particulars. Śīva, the worshippers of Viṣṇu, the devotees of the goddess, and the Sādhus of the Jains continued to write and chant their devotional songs, and an additional note was struck by a new order of ascetics, led by Sahajānand Swāmi, and a cluster of poetesses took up the thread where it was left by Mirān Bāi four hundred years ago. These are the distinguishing features of this period, which continues till A. D. 1850.

Amongst the more than half a dozen poets who are

Dhiro Bhagat.

known by the appellation of Bhagat (a devotee) Dhiro Bhagat (A. D. 1753-1825) holds no mean rank. He belonged to a place called Gothda near Sāvli, in the Baroda district, and was a Brahm Bhât by caste, a caste known proverbially for its arbitrary ways and sharp temper. His wife was Jatanba, a woman with a hot temper, and said to be his maternal uncle's widow, who he had remarried. He owned some ancestral fields, and acquired the privilege from the Thakore of Bhâdarvâ of charging at each marriage in his territory, eight annās from the bridegroom, before allowing the nuptials to be celebrated. This marriage duty, called *Toranaghodâ* [the coming of the bridegroom's horse (ghodâ) to the place of marriage adorned with festoons (*Torana*)], brought him some income to supplement the produce of his fields and on the whole he was well off. He was not well educated in the beginning, but while just entering upon his teens, he happened to fall in with a gifted Sannyâsi, whom he acknowledged as his gûrû, and from whom he got instructed in that knowledge (*Jnân*) which he celebrated so well in his poetry. The functions

Gratitude towards
gûrû.

of a gûrû and his pupil are elaborately narrated by him in several songs, which are over-flowing with gratitude towards a teacher, who, as it were, took him out of darkness into light. He did not know Sanskrit, but knew a little Hindi, still, as it appears from even a cursory glance at his works, the absence of the knowledge of Sanskrit was no obstacle

to his thorough understanding and exposition of the principles of Yoga and Jñân. He preferred Jñân to Yoga, and was as greatly attached to Átma Jñân (self-knowledge) as Akho, and his poetry does show that he expounded it much more popularly and with greater felicity of language than Akho.

Dhiro had hit upon an original plan of spreading the knowledge of his work amongst the people, and giving it publicity. Living near the shores of the Mahi river, he often used to go there for a bath, with pieces of paper on which were written out his latest compositions. He bottled them up either in hollow sticks of bamboo or small gourds, and tightly closed their open ends or mouths, and thereafter let them loose on the surface of the waters. They were thus carried away to different parts on the country, where on being picked up, they were sure to be read by strangers.

Dhiro had many pupils, one of whom Bâpu Sâheb

His pupils. Gâikwâr, deserves the title of a poet.

The long compositions of Dhirâ are eight or nine in number,* but he is best known for that work of his which is written in a form called Kâfi. He is the master of that form and no other poet in Gujarat has been able to approach him. In his work, called

* They are: रणयज्ञ; स्वरूपनी काफीओ; मतवादी; आत्मबोध; ज्ञानकको; योगमार्ग; प्रश्नोत्तर मालिका; अवलवाणी; छटक पदो; गरबीओ; धोळ.

स्वरूपनी काफ़ीभो, he has very instructively shown the correct duties of a gûrû and a pupil, and shewn how fleeting are the pleasures of youth, wealth, body, mind and worldly pursuits. The instinct of heredity—for all Bhâts or Bârots are descended from families of court-poets or singers—has lent great force to his poetry, and his style is virile. He uses the common vocabulary. He never employs hard or obscure words. He makes his meaning clear in simple language and so his Kâfis are more popular than the satires of Akhâ.* He tries to persuade. He does not use the lash and tear the skin like Akhâ.

* This is one of his well-known poems.

फूल्यो शुं फरे छे रे, भूल्यो भवकूपमां पढ्यो;
मनुष्यवेह रुपी रे, खोयो मणि हाथे चढयो;
डाह्यो थई दुनीआमां फरे छे, तेणे शुं सर्युं तारं काज;
ते न जाण्युं जे जाहुं पलकमां, केम करी रहेशे लाज;
डहापण तारं जाण्युं रे, ज्यारे जम हाथे चढयो;

* * * * *

मनमां ले शिखामण मारी, ममता मूकी परी;
कर स्मरण सरजनहारनुं, जनम सफळ ले करी;
दास धीरो कहे छे रे, सौथी तुं सरस नीवड्यो.

Why do you gad about so elated? You have fallen into the well (pit) of the world, you have lost the gem of human birth after having acquired it. You walk about like a wise man in the world, but how will that benefit you? You do not know that in a moment you will have to leave it and then how will you look respectable (face your creator)? You will know how wise (ironical for unwise) you were when the myrmidons of Yama (death) would carry you away.

* * * * *

Even more gentle^{and} and milder than Dhirâ in his language, was Nirânt Bhagat (A. D. 1770-1846) a Pâtidâr of Dethân near Baroda. Like the majority of people living round about Dâkore,

Nirânt Bhagat.

Nirânt too, was in the habit of going on a pilgrimage to the famous shrine, every full-moon day, growing the Tulsi plant in the palm of his hand. Once he fell in with a Mahomedan, by name Miyân Sâheb, a monqtheist in belief and non-worshipper of images. He had a long talk with his Hindu fellow traveller, whom he ultimately convinced

His search after
Brahma Jnân.

that his God was always near him, and that it was, therefore, meaningless to go in search of Him, Tulsi in hand, every month. Nirânt felt the truth of the preaching and accepted him as a gûrû. This story may be true or not, but it serves to show the transition of the poet from being a mere worshipper of the image of Kṛishṇa to a state of mind, where images are discarded, and where Brahma Jnân

Take my advice, leave off your attachment (to things mundane), remember your creator, and reap the full fruit of your birth. If you do it, then your servant Dhiro says, that you would come out the best of all.

This is another,

गुरु विना ज्ञानी रे, ते तो नर अंध ठयों,
दीपक छे घटमां रे, जो तेपर छार ठयों.

* * * * *

A man with knowledge but without a gûrû (who alone could have imparted it properly) is like a blind man. The light is there, inside the chatty (inside you), but there is a cover (of ignorance) over it (which only a gûrû can remove).

(knowledge of the Brahma) is held to be sufficient for saivation. His poetry accordingly shows both the phases of his belief.

Nirânt was married to two wives, and was father of about eight children, whose descendants still survive. He passed most of his time at Baroda. He left behind him about seventeen pupil-followers, three of whom—Vanârashibâi, Girjabâi and Jam-nâbâi, were ladies. The most distinguished of his pupils was Bâpu Sâheb Gâikwâr, who had come to him for spiritual guidance and instruction, after sitting for a time at the feet of Dhirâ Bhagat.

He had a rival at Vâghodiâ, a Brahmin, Manchhârâm, to whom he has addressed a letter in verse (A. D. 1801) putting him certain problems on the philosophy the Vedantins. The language of the letter is a reflection of the nature of the writer. It is full of humility—he calls himself the dust of the feet (पदरज) of the Brahmin, who, he says, in the very nature of things is supposed to be more cultured and learned than a mere Pâtidâr. Manchhârâm was unable to answer them, and ultimately joined the band of Nirânt's followers. The absence of all aggressiveness, the tranquillity, so to speak, breathed by his verses show his peaceful and quiet temper.

There is a great admixture of Urdu words in the works of Nirânt; with that exception, his language is simple and pure.

He thus defines Brahma. "That which has no form and no attribute, that which has no name, that which owns nothing and at the same time owns everything, that which is like the tree and the seed.*

The very name 'Nirânt' signifies, peacefulness, absence of all anxiety.

Bâpu Saheb Gâikwâr (A.D. 1779-1843) was a Maratha Sirdar, belonging to a well-connected family at Baroda. He started life like the other scions of his family, and passed his time in acquiring the accomplishments proper for his station in society, riding, wrestling, sword exercise, lathi play, etc., which had least to do either with religion or letters. But from his childhood he was fond of frequenting temples, and while there, used to question any Sâdhu or ascetic who happened to drop in, about religious matters, and if he did not get a satisfactory reply, treated them with scant courtesy. He thus acquired a taste early in life, which resulted in a full and rapid development later on at the hands of Dhirâ and Nirânt Bhagats. He was sent by his father to look after lands at Gothda, where Dhiro lived, and it was thus that he was initiated into matters spiritual by him, till he acknowledged him as his

renounces sport for religion and literature.

* रूप नहि जेने गुण नहि, ने नाम नहि छे एहुं;
ब्रह्म नहि ने सरवश तेनुं, वृक्ष बीज छे जेवुं.

gûrâ, and served him so loyally as to prepare his *ñbooka* for him, a service generally attended to by menials.* After his return to Baroda he left off living the life of a Grâhastha (householder), and became a Bhakta, i. e., passed his time in discoursing with saints and holy people, in chanting religious verses and writing sacred poetry. He continued for a time to serve the Gâikwâr, but his heart was not in his work, and he was often found fault with, but always escaped by going to His Highness direct, and reciting to him some of his own lines which pleased the Maharaja so much, that he easily forgave him.

Bâpu Saheb was as fond of reciting Bhajans† in company, as Narsinh Mehta was, and like him, he was once invited by the Dheds of a certain locality in Baroda, to give them the benefit of his recitation. Bâpu

His passion for singing Bhajans.

Saheb accepted the invitation unhesitatingly. His father, when he came to know about it, felt considerably scandalised at his son's conduct, and asked him to leave his house. Bâpu Saheb cheerfully carried out the behest, and went to live in a separate house. His mother-in-law also rebuked him, and he in reply wrote out some verses, the purport of which was that he confessed he was spoiled, but that it was like the spoiling of a stone by the touch of the philosopher's stone, or like the spoiling of a pupil by the company of

* He has narrated this incident in a poem.

† Hymns. Devotional songs.

* his gūrfā.* After a few years, his relatives took him back into the family house.

In Gujarat and Kathiawad, after the bamboo bier on which a dead body is carried to the burning ground has left the house, it is usual for the females—of the house, of the caste and of friends—to form themselves into a circle or divide into pairs, and accompanied by the rhythmic movement of their hands which regularly move away from and fall back on their chests—commonly called beating the breast—recite a dirge in which the virtues of the deceased are sung, exaggerated and extolled.† Bāpu Saheb, while once

* અમે બગડ્યા, અમે બગડ્યા, લેજો જાણી રે,
માઈ અમે બગડ્યા, અમે બગડ્યા, લેજો જાણી,
* * * * *
પારસ સંગ થકી પત્થર જોને બગડ્યો,
થયો પારસ તે જાણે કોક જ્ઞાની રે,
તમે બગડો તો માઈ એવા બગડજો,
ત્યારે તો મટે ચોરાશીની જ ઘાણી રે,
સતગુરુના સંગથકી સેવક જુઓ બગડ્યો,
જેણે સતનામ લીધું છે છાણી રે.

† It is called a Rājio, perhaps because the deceased is given as much importance as a Rājā (King) by the mourners whose death means such a loss to the family as the death of a King to his subjects. Women, very shrewdly take this opportunity, under the garb of supplying materials for lament, of trotting out their own grievances. For instance, the mother or sister of the widow of the deceased—supposing he has left one—would enumerate all the inconveniences she had been put to during his lifetime by his mother or sister.

passing by the way, happened to witness a party of such female mourners, chanting a Râjîâ. He was struck with the emptiness of the subject-matter of the song, and also with the ignorance of the reciters. He therefore composed a dirge called Râma Râjio, in which he descanted upon the six great enemies (ॐ) of humanity, Passion, Anger, Avarice, Fascination, Pride and Envy. Nirânt Bhakta approved of it, and in many places this didactic dirge is substituted in place of the ordinary one.

He has written no long or continuous poetic work, but many of his short poems have been preserved. In spite of his being a Maratha by birth, with Marathi as his mother tongue, he has written correct Gujarati without betraying the slightest tinge of his foreign origin. Indeed, at times, he uses mannerisms or provincialisms as if he were one born to them.

In numerous places, has he gratefully acknowledged the debt he owed to his two masters, Dhiro and Nirânt.

His intimate knowledge of the world and its ways is clearly reflected in his poems, but the one great service he tried to render to the people was his persistent preaching to Hindus and Mahomedans not to quarrel with one another, as in effect the God of the one was the God of the other. 'That Râma and Rehmân were one, O

brothers, that Krishna and Karim were one and the same, that between Vishnu and Allah there was no difference; that Allah and Alakh (the Invisible) were one.”* He was said to be very independent in expressing his thoughts, and equally independent in conduct, and surely, it does require some freedom from prejudice to speak of Allah and Alakh in one breath.

Premánand Swámi (A. D. 1779–1845) lived at Gadhadā in Kathiawad, one of the three principal seats venerated by the followers of Sahajánand Swámi. He was well versed in music, he sang and played well. He sings of Krishna Lílá as if he were a Gopi, “a sylvan maid”, and Krishna her lover. He is hence called Premánand Sakhi.† His verses called “The bereavement (or Death) of Sahajánand Swámi,” the founder of the Swáminárayan sect, with whom he seems to have resided, are said to have drawn tears from the eyes of his audience when sung by him. He has written a poem-‡ describing the dinner he would provide for Krishna, which gives a very good idea of the dainties and sweets which go to make up the banquet of a Gujarati Lucullus.

* राम ने रहेमान तमे एक भाईओ जाणजो,
कृष्ण ने करीम एक कहीए.
विष्णु बिसमिल्लामां भेद नथी भाल्यो,
अने अल्ला अलख एक लहीए रे.

† A female companion.

‡ A dish for dining.

Bhojâ alias Bhojal Bhakta, was a native of Kathiawad. His family came originally from Gujarat, and were Pâtidârs or Kunbi by caste. He was born (about A. D. 1785) in an illiterate family, and till the end of his life (he died in 1850 A. D.), he remained illiterate in the sense that he never knew how to write. He recited his poems, and they were taken down either by his pupils or were stored in his memory, to be communicated whenever required to his pupils and admirers. Many of them have thus passed from mouth to mouth, and are perpetuated by those itinerant singers who are met with every day in the streets of Gujarat and Kathiawad towns and villages, and who pour them forth to the accompaniment of a stringed guitar, which is called a Tamboorâ (तंबुरी).

Bhojâ lived on milk only for the first twelve years of his life, and thereafter came in contact with an ascetic who came to his village from the mountain forests of Girnar. He made a great impression on his youthful mind, and at his persuasion he began to partake of grain and other food. The ascetic taught him what devotion (Bhakti) meant, and Bhojal turned out such an apt pupil that in a short time his own village people and some outsiders began to adore him as a saint. Some time after he moved to a larger place, called Fatehpur, near Amreli. He began to practise *Tapa* there, and passed whole days in counting the beads of his rosary and repeating सोहं सोहं or सोहं हंस, which is known as

Bhojâ Bhagat,

a remarkable personality though illiterate.

Bhojâ's faith and its test.

Ajapájapa. This he did for twelve years, and at the end of the period was supposed to have acquired the power to work miracles. A Gáikwári officer of the time Vithobá Divánji, who had conquered a large part of Kathiawad then, and had his headquarters at the neighbouring town of Amreli wanted to find out the truth of this fact, and so he called him, and shut him up in a room, where he was supplied with food thrice in the day, but was kept under strict surveillance and not allowed to leave his place of confinement. Bhojá, undaunted by such strictness, quietly assumed his accustomed posture of sitting and began to tell the beads of the rosary. This continued for a fortnight, and by divine grace, it is said, all desire in him to answer any call of nature had vanished although he partook of hearty meals. The Divánji was convinced that Bhojá was no hollow saint, and he asked for instruction at his hands. Bhojá said, he was an ignorant villager (*kuṇbi*), and dared not preach to officers, perhaps, his rough language might hurt their feelings. The Divánji said that he would forgive anything in such a Sâdhu, and then it was that Bhojá composed those 150 Châbkhâs (whips) which have made him famous. Some of them were addressed direct to the Divánji but he took them in good part.

His last days were passed at Virpur, where there is a temple dedicated to him and where his foot prints are adored. His family members are still alive, and there is still a large following of his in Kathiawad, although he has not founded any separate sect or cult like Kabir or Sahajánand.

Just as Sámal is considered unique for his Chhappás,
 Dayáram for his Garbis, Pritam for his
 His Châbkhâs a Padas, Narsinh Mehta for his Prabhâti-
 masterpiece. yâns and Dhira for his Kafis, so Bhojâ
 is considered a master of Châbkhâs-poems in the nature
 of moral whips.

Excepting for his Salaiyâkhyân, he has written no
 His Salaiyâkhyân. continuous work. This little story is
 to the effect that the parents of one
 Salaiyâ, were in the habit of never taking their meals
 before they had satisfied the wants of at least one Sâdhu.
 Once it rained incessantly for a week and they could get
 no Sâdhu. At last one was found who was afflicted with
 leprosy and running sores, still they brought him home
 with great pleasure and after washing his feet, placed be-
 fore him rich food. He said he was a cannibal and always
 ate one human being. Nothing daunted by the difficulty,
 both husband and wife prepared themselves to kill their only
 child and cook his flesh to gratify the Sâdhu. The boy
 cheerfully submitted to the ordeal, and was killed and
 cooked by his own mother. At last when everything was
 ready, the Sâdhu objected that he would not dine at the
 inauspicious house of a childless couple. His hostess was
 equal to this difficulty too. She said she was five months
 pregnant and to convince her exacting guest of the fact,
 took up a knife to cut open her body to show him the un-
 born foetus. Here she was stopped, and the Sâdhu
 revealed himself as Hari, who had been immensely pleased

with their devotion which he rewarded by reviving their killed child.

He has written some Horis also, the most popular amongst them being "a request to Krishna" by a Gopi to assist her in her difficulty.*

He was pitiless in denouncing those hypocrites who cheat the world in the garb of Sâdhus. Some of his Châbkhâs (whips) are laid on with rigor. He says, "The Bâvâ applying ashes to his body, starts to cheat the simple world. He gives threads and papers into which he says he has worked magical properties, and he distributes pills saying that they are unfailing in their effect. You will find that many of them are really Kunbis and low castes (Kolis); and to them come day after day, shoals of women with the view of worshipping them. They—the Sadhus—address them as mother, but really their hearts are burning with carnal passion. They gather together male and female followers and enjoy with them a meal of bread, milk and sugar.†

* The first lines being,

નાથ મોરી અરજ સુણો અવિનાશી
હું તો જનમ જનમ તોરી દાસી—નાથ.

† दुनिया भरमावा भोळी, चाल्यो बाबो भभूती चोळी रे,
दोरा घागा ने चीट्टी करे बाबो, आपे गुणकारी गोळी रे,
अनेक जातना एवा बने छे, कोई कणबी कोई कोळी रे.—दुनिया.
नित्य नित्य दर्शन नियम धरीने, आवे तरिया तणी टोळी रे,
माई, माई, कही मान दिये पण, हैये कामनानी होळी रे,—दुनिया.

Bhojâ Bhakt says that these Sâdhus have drowned their followers into the sea of the world (sins).''

In yet another "whip" he sings, "Look at these so called Bâvâs, who have assumed their garb to cheat the world. They daily frequent that place for a bath where women congregate to draw water. The Bâvâ sits down to sing his songs before widows and females, when he finds that there are no males in the house. He takes an opportunity of fondling the children of others just in order to introduce himself to them and draw towards himself their regard. When the wife of a good man is in sulks, the Bâvâ makes it his business to go to her and appease her. He behaves as if he were a saint and he imposes on the wise, but really he is as we have shown him. Although he is ash-besmeared, he lusts for women and wishes to live on deception. He burns incense and pretends to meditate but this he does to impose upon simple people. Bhojâ Bhaktâ says that by worshipping him you are really going to the kingdom of the Dead."*

चेला चेलीने मेळा करी बावो, खाय खीर खांड ने पोळी रे,
भोजो भगत कहे भवसागरमां, बावे मार्यां बोळी रे,—दुनिया.

* जोई ल्यो जगतना बावा, धर्यां मेख धूतीने खावा,
प्रेमदाओ घणी पाणी भरे त्यां, नित्य नित्य बावो जाये नहावा रे,
रांडी छांडी घेर नर नाहोय तो, बावोजी बेसे गावा रे.—जोई ल्यो.
लोकनां छोकरां तेडी रमावे, बावो पराणे प्रीतढी थावा रे,
गृहस्थनी स्त्री ज्यारे रीसायछे त्यारे, बावोजी जायछे मनावे रे.—जोई ल्यो.

The following "whip" is also widely known. "O my soul, adore the creator. This world is but a dream: wealth, riches, goods, treasures, sons and family (will be left behind). You will have to depart alone and be subjected to a beating by the god of Death. Imposing houses and beautiful balconies, endless terraces and the palaces of billionaires and millionaires, all these they have left behind. You will be carefully tied up in a bamboo frame work (bier) on which flowers are thrown, and at the four corners of which four cocoanuts are hanging, and the mourners will follow you with loud cries. You could not sleep but on the softest of beds, you would pursue a hundred professions, but they will burn you all the same, carefully stoking the fire just as a blacksmith smelts iron. On the cremation ground they would pile up fire wood in a square heap on which they would deposit your body, covering it with still more wood. The mourners would set fire to the heap and surely enough the fire throw out burning coals. After the burning is over, both the male and female mourners would take a bath and go back to their own houses, and Bhojâ Bhagat says that after weeping for ten days, completely forget you."*

સિદ્ધાઈ દેલાઈ શાળાં સમજાવે, પળ હવાલ છે હાવા રે,
રાખોઈ ચોઢી પળ રાંઢોના રસિયા, ચોઢે હરામનું ચાવા રે.—જોઈ લ્યો.
ધૂપ ધરી ધ્યાન ધરે બાવો, મોઢાંને મરમાવા રે,
મોજો મગત કહે, માવે સેવો એને, જમપુરીમાં જાવા રે.—જોઈ લ્યો.

* પ્રાણીઆ મજી લેને કિરતાર, આ તો સ્વપનું છે સંસાર,
ધન દોલત ને માલ સ્વજીના, પુત્ર અને પરિવાર,
એમાંથી જાઈશ તું એકલો, પછે શાશે જમના માર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ

Bhojâ Bhagat's language is the very reverse of classical.

His style. He having never moved in cultured

society, nor studied well, it is neither refined nor smooth. It is rough and full of provincialisms; it comes from the heart, and without undergoing any process of tempering, strikes the imagination of the reader or hearer, with the force of the blow of a steam hammer. It is rough like that of a countryman's but none the less sincere.

Manohar Swâmi (A. D. 1788-1845) was a Nâgar Brâh-

min of Junâgadh, whence he migrated to

Manohar Swâmi Gogo near Bhâvnagar in A. D. 1828, in search of employment. Gogo was in the early part of the nineteenth century a stronghold of Nâgar Brahmins, who later on crossed over to Bhâvnagar and headed by the late Gaurishanker Udaishanker Oza, C. S. I., did so much for the development of the state. Manohar was a clever calligraphist, and an expert in the imitation of handwriting.

ઁંચી મેઢી અજબ સરસા, ગોસ્તળો નહિ પાર,
 કોઢી ધ્વજ ને લક્ષપતિ, તેનાં બાંધ્યા રહ્યાં ઘરબાર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ.
 ઁપર ફુલડાં ફરફરે ને, હેઢે શ્રીફલ્લ ચાર,
 ઢીક કરીને ઁને ઢાઢડીમાં ઢાલ્યો, પછે ઢાંસે પઢે પોકાર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ.
 સેજ તલ્લયું ઢિના સુતો નહિ, જીવ હુમ્મર કરતો હજાર,
 ઢોરી ઢોરીને ઢૂબ જઢ્ઢાયો, જેમ લોઢું ગાઢે હુઢાર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ.
 સ્મશાન જઈ ઢેહે ઢલઢકીને, માથે છે કાષ્ઠનો માર,
 અમ્મિ મેલીને ઁમાં રહ્યાં, અને નિશ્ચય સરે અંગાર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ.
 સ્નાન કરીને ઢાલી નીકલ્લ્યાં, નર ને ઢઢી નાર,
 મોજો મગત કહે ઢશ ઢી રોઢેને, પછે મેલ્યો ઢિસાર રે.—પ્રાણીઆ.

an ascetic poet. He was once charged with forgery but

acquitted in default of convincing testimony. He was a scholar in Sanskrit and Persian, and he studied the Upanishads through their Persian translations, made in the reign of Akbar. For generations before, Junagadh had become the battlefield of the two rival creeds, Vaishnavite and Śaivite and as a result he had lost faith in and liking for both, and ultimately in A. D. 1838 took refuge in Sannyās (renunciation of the world). He lived as an

ascetic too at Bhāvnagar in the Nilkanth Māhādev temple, assuming the name of Sachchidānand, and as such was the gūṛū of Gaurishanker. He has written commentaries on the Bhagavad Gītā, the Rāma Gītā and a grammar of Gujarati. He has also composed poems in Gujarati and Sanskrit against the tenets of Vallabhāchārya. Like all true reformers, he hated those worshippers who went to temples for show, he also disliked idol worshippers, he saw no good in pilgrimages; he favoured only that salvation which comes from the finding out of the Swarup (one's own form or self.) His verses are at times simple and at times hard and philosophical, but always free from provincialisms, and are plainly the product of a cultured, observant and practical mind. He asks how does one expect salvation without a good teacher, and, how can you get him, in a world "where some are full of lust, some of anger, some of avarice, where the really generous appear to be humble, where some are on pleasure bent, while others prefer retirement (from the

How salvation is
attained.

world), where some are happy and some unhappy, where some are learned scholars (Paṇḍits), and some are astrologers, where those who are deceivers wield power, where some are wealthy, and some poor, some sing, some dance, where some start false creeds and where some are worshipped as gods, where none can resolve the doubts of their pupils, but acquire wealth by knavery. They call this mere form of the body, real Brahma, and do not understand what the soul is. It is the case of a blind person following another blind person and both falling into a well. He who sits at the feet of a real gûrû, having strong faith in him, his false arguments, his errors and his difficulties (of intellect) are sure to be removed. He would then know what is Sachchidānand.* He would then disappear within himself. Manohar says, 'the fear of death and birth would (then) be gone and his doubts would also vanish.'''†

* The existent, wise and happy state.

† कामी क्रोधी लोभी कोई दाता दीन जणाय,
कई रागी कई त्यागी कोई, सुखी दुखी देखाय,
कई पंडीत कई जाण्या जोशी, छळीआ बळीआ थाय,
कई घरबारी कई मीखारी, कई नाचे कई गाय,
कई पाखंडे पंथ चलावे, प्रभु थईने पूजाय.
शिष्य तणो संशय नव टाळे, धूतीने धन खाय,
देहाकृतिने ब्रह्म ठरावे, चैतन नव ल्हेषाय,
अंध अंधनी पाछळ चाले उभय कुवामां जाय.
रुढ विश्वास धरीने जे कोई, सद्गुरु सरणे जाय,

Girdhar, known as the writer of the only popular versified Rāmāyaṇ in Gujarati, was the son of a village officer (Talāṭī) of a small village called Māsar in the Baroda district. He was a Dasā Lād Bania by caste. He was

born in A. D. 1787 and died in 1852, under tragic circumstances. His sister was married at Baroda, and she called him there and got him employment. While in Baroda he added to his rudimentary education in vernacular some knowledge of Sanskrit and Hindi from a Jain Gorji, Vallabhvijaya.

Later, he came in contact with a Vaiṣṇav Maharaj Purushottamji, under whose influence, he took to Bhakti-mārga and began to write verses on Kṛishṇa Bhakti. He started on a pilgrimage with another Maharaj Rangilal by name. On their return, he wanted to visit the renowned seat of the Vallabhāchārya Maharaj at Shrināthji near Udeypore, but Rangilal* did not permit him to do so. He took the prohibition so much to heart that he retired to his tent, and shortly after, gave up the ghost.

His works comprise the Tulsi Vivāh (A. D. 1815) a poem on the marriage of Kṛishṇa with Tulsi, a symbolical function held every year on the night of the eleventh of Kartik Sud, 2. The

तेनां संशय तर्क, विपर्यय, हृदय ग्रंथी भेदाय,
मनोहर जन्म मरण भय भांगे, संशय दूर पळाव.

* He belonged to the Rādhā Vallabhi sect which cares more for Rādhā than for Kṛishṇa. Not so the Vallabhis.

Rāj Suya Yajna (A. D. 1831) a poem describing the imperial sacrificial ceremony performed by the Pāṇḍavas, and composed in a month, 3. The Gokul Līlā and 4. Twelve months of the Bereavement of Rādhā, 5. The Rāmāyaṇ 6. The Aśwa Medha, 7. The Mathurālīlā alias Krishṇa Līlā and several miscellaneous verses. His compositions are not of a distinguished order.

Ranchhod Bhakta, who was alive in A. D. 1804, was a Bania of Torna, near Kapadvanj in the Kaira district.

Ranchhod Bhakta. His Rāmāyaṇ, Rādhā Vivāh, description of Rādhā becoming sulky with Krishṇa,

and Ranchhodji no Garbo, narrating how Krishṇa for the sake of his humble devotee Bodānā quitted Dwārka for Dākore, furnish a specimen of his style which is such as can appeal to and be understood by even the masses. In his miscellaneous verses is found a short poem, which is comic, describing the virtues of the God of Sustenance—
अन्नदेव.

Ranchhodji Diván (A. D. 1768 to 1841) has left his

Ranchhodji Diván. name engraved on the pages of the history of Kathiawad. In the earlier part

of his life, he wielded the sword rather than the pen, and although a Nāgar Brāhmin by caste, he had mastered the profession of arms so well, that the states of Junagadh, Jāmnagar and Cutch had at one time or another had to experience his singular martial prowess. It was in A. D. 1805 when Colonel Walker "settled" the somewhat anarchical state of the province by fixing the amount of

“Pesh Kash” (subsidy) that Ranchhodji found the work for his sword gone, and took to the pen. Many allusions have been made to him by English writers like Sir John Malcolm and Mrs. Postans. In Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine mention is made of his superb qualities. Mrs. Postans, who saw him reposing under a vine-clad bower surrounded by a number of amanuenses, sitting on Persian carpets, says that “his large black eyes lustrous as burning lamps, were illumined by the fire of intellect within,

and he was an acknowledged patron of poets, men of science and literary genius.” He assisted Government in

putting down the practices of Sati and female infanticide. In Persian he has written the *Târikh-e-Sorath*, a history of Sorath and also the *Rukât-e-Gânâgân* (various letters). He has translated into Vraj, a great work called the *Śivarahasya*, besides a number of other works,

while in Gujarati, he has also written about a dozen works, chief among them being the *Śiva Gītâ* and *Chandipâth nâ Garbâ*, the latter being a rhapsody, narrating the rather gruesome adventures of the goddess *Śakti*. Like some other natives of Juna-

gad, he had contracted a dislike for the Vallabh form of Vaiṣṇavism, and he went so far as not to name any member of his family with a name, which would have even a remote tinge of that cult.

Harirâm (A. D. 1824), a native of Surat and an

Harirām. Audich Brahmin by caste, has in a simple style described the marriages-Swayamvaras-of several queens like Sītā and Rukmiṇī, besides writing verses on the bereavement of the Gopis.

Haribhat. Haribhat (A. D. 1829) lived at Baroda. He is said to have been the founder of a small sect of the name of Data Hari. An epitome of the life of Krishṇa, and a lullaby-like song, describing the sulky frolics the child Krishṇa indulged in with his mother Jaśoda, are his well-known works.*

Viravijay. Viravijay, a Jain Yati (ascetic) of Ahmedabad, who was alive in A. D. 1849, is famous in Gujarati literature for some verses of his—thirty-six couplets in all—full of moral and practical advice, such as these.

Go (deal) not with depraved women, do not form

* These are its opening lines:

हालरडुं

माता जशोदा बोलावे, जमवा लालने,
चालो लाडकवाया लागुं तमने पाय,
तेम तेम रीसाईने रंग रसियाजी आवे नहि.
पाछळ दोडे तेम तेम नटवर नासी जाय.

माता जशोदा बोलावे.

Mother Jaśoda was calling her darling for his dinner. My darling, come along, I fall at your feet. But the dear little rogue would go into sulks more and more, and not respond to her. The more she would run after him, the faster he would run away.

friendship with or conceive love for the base. It results in disgrace, loss of home, wealth and life.

* * * * *

‘Do not ridicule your teacher, or a Sâdhu, or your king and his moral complets, or a learned man. Move away from a spot where you see elephants, tigers, serpents and men fighting. While eating your meals praise the food, do not run it down, do not dine in the sun, do not stay overnight with a sick man, do not drink water on an empty stomach.’*

Quite a long list of miscellaneous poets, with nothing in them deserving of special mention, Miscellaneous poets. might be furnished here. They move in the same groove, some of them show a little originality here or a flash of wit or genius there, but their performance does not rise above the commonplace.

Purushottam, a Rajput of Ikharvâ near Jambusar and a disciple of Nirânt Bhakta; Mitho, a Dhâdhi of Limbdi in

* वेदया साथे वणज न करीए, नीचसुं नेह न करीएजी रे;
खांपण आवे घर धन जावे, जीवीतने परहरीए;—सुणजो सजनोरे.
* * * * *

गुरु जोगी राजा पंडीतने, हांसी करी नव हसीएजी रे,
हाथी वाघ सरप नर वढतां, देखीने दूर खसीए.—सुणजो सजनोरे.
* * * * *

अन्न वखाणी, वखोडी न खावुं, तडके बेसी न जमवुंजी रे,
मांदा पासे रात तजीने, नरणां पाणी न पीवुं.—सुणजो सजनोरे.

Kathiawad; Mukund, a Praśnorā Brahmin of Kathiawad; Dayāl, Ratandas,¹ Raghunandan, Hargovan (who died in A. D. 1841), a Bhat Mevādā Brahmin and a special devotee of Ambā Mātā,² Raghunāthdas,³ Krishnārām,⁴ Dewā

1. The life of Salaiyā written by Ratandās which begins with,
 शेठ सगाळशा साधुने सेवे वाणीओ पाळे व्रत
 is well known.

2. His verses on the seat of the Mātā at Surat, will flatter any native of that place, in so far as he would be pleased to learn that outsiders attach so much importance and sanctity to some of its most ordinary temples.

3. Out of his many poems, long and short, the two following garbis even now delight the ladies of Gujarat.

(१) ओधवजी संदेशो कहेजो श्यामने,
 मारा सम जो, मूकी मननो मेल जो,
 कानुडो कपटीरे, आवडो केम थयो ?
 छळ करीने छेतरौए नहि, छेल जो.—ओधवजी०
 आटला दिवस रे, आहुं नव जाणती,
 धरबी न जाण्या, धूताराना ढंग जो;
 पाणीडां पीने रे, घर शुं पूछीए ?
 बाळपणामां कीधो, एशुं संग जो.—ओधवजी०

(२) तमे अजाण्या हमे जाणीए रे;
 मारो घालवडो नव ताणीए रे;
 तमे समजी ल्यो मज मांही रे;
 सामजीआ वहाका रहोनी वेळ्या रे.

4. The description of Kalikāl—the present or iron age of this poet is both graphic and sarcastic. He ridicules almost all the present social customs of the Hindus; he does not like that they should squat on dirty roads for public dinners, that for an individual invitation, four members

Saheb, Dungar Bârot, Nâreo Râmaiyo, Butio Bhakta, Shântidas,⁵ Bhavân Bhakta,⁶ a Sâdhu belonging to the Kânfatâ (those who have their ears split) Order of Sâdhus, of Cambay, Râvo Bhakta,⁷ Nimânand, Potho, Durgâdas, Nâthâswami of Dâkore, Dânvijay, a Jain,⁸

of a family should go to a dinner, that Hindus should greet one another by means of a salam instead of a Namaskâra, that they should sell their daughters, that those who call themselves Vaiṣṇava should worship women, that girls aged ten and twelve should be with child, that women should bathe undressed, that five women should use only one water pot while answering a call of nature, that women should sing improper songs at times of marriage, that they should beat their breasts uncovered in public and numerous other old corrupt customs and usages which are of daily observance in these days, are condemned by him outright.

5. His garbis describing the amours of Krishna and the Gopis are popular with the female sex. One of them in which a Gopi invites Krishna to pass a night with her is often sung by them.

આવો મારે ઘેર માળવા, હોજીરાજ,
આવો મારે ઘેર માળવા.

6. He has written about Krishna and Râma. There is a fine dialogue between Râvan and his wife Mandodari in which she persuades Râvan to forego his animosity towards Râma. It begins

ઓ રાજાજી રામની સાથે રાગ ન રાક્ષીએ.

7. The famous lines—the only ones known of this obscure poet in which he supplicates the goddess Ambâ to save his sinking ship is a fine allegory. It describes realistically the last moments of a ship and its battered condition. The ship is saved. The lines begin

ઘેડો બાઈ જુલતો તારો રે, અંબે આઈ પાર ઉતારો રે.

8. He has written a strange poem on eighteen cross relationships. A prostitute had twins, a girl and a boy. She did not like the bother of keeping them, so put them in a floating box, and cast them adrift on a river. Two men picked them up; one of them adopted the boy and the

Ravidas, Mādhavdas, Jivaṇ, Raghuram,⁹ Kuber, Lakshmidas, Revashanker,¹⁰ Devidas of Vasāvad, Rāmkrishṇa, Rāje, Bhukhaṇ Bhakta, Thobhaṇdas, Abhivijay, Kumudchandra, Govindas,¹¹ Jaśvijay, Vajio,¹² Krishṇadas,¹³

other the girl. When the twins grew up, they married. Eventually they came to know that they were brother and sister and repenting of the union, the husband left his wife, and went back to the place where his mother was following her infamous profession. Not knowing she was his mother, he lived with her, and a son was born to him by his own mother. When his sister-wife came to know where he had gone, she saw her mother who was also her mother-in-law, and told her of the incestuous union she had formed. The daughter then enumerated the strange result of the connexion, she was her mother, mother-in-law, brother's wife, co-wife and so on. Ultimately, all three took a vow to leave the world by way of penance for their wickedness.

9. He has a poem called "Narsinh Mehta ni Hundi" just like Premānand's.

10. His चंद्रावली (chandrāvalās), a particular sort of metrical composition, are well known.

11. The quarrel between Krishṇa and his wife Satyabhāmā about the Parijat flower, fomented by Nārada, is depicted by this poet, beginning with

हां रे नारद स्वर्गभुवन थकी आब्या,
एक पुष्प अनुपम लाब्या रे,
नारद स्वर्गभुवन थकी आब्या.

Its popularity amongst women is unmatched. It gives a most vivid description of what a woman's tongue can do when she sulks with her husband. Before her onslaught poor Krishṇa finds himself nowhere. She lost her temper with him, as Nārada had told her that Krishṇa had presented his co-wife Rukmīṇī, with the heavenly flower in preference to her.

12. He is one of the few poets who have written on the life of Rāma and Sītā. His "Message of Sītā to Rāma" is very touching.

Jivāṇdas,¹⁴ Vāghji,¹⁵ and Rājārām,¹⁶ almost exhaust the list.

The sect founded by Sahajānand Swāmi (who came originally from Ayodhyā) in Gujarat and Kathiawad, although not very old, has been successful in winning a very large number of adherents in both the provinces. Its three principal seats, at Vadatāl and Ahmedabad in Gujarat, and at Gadhadā in Kathiawad, wield enormous power over its adherents, and the special organization of Sādhus created by the Swāmi, works with almost military precision and discipline in the carrying out of the objects of the Order, both spiritual and temporal. The seats are very rich, they own considerable immoveable properties and are believed to have large hoards of cash. Its working is most economical, and as it has been fortunate in attracting within its fold a large number of the artisan class, who have been taught that service rendered to the Order *gratis* is a step towards winning righteousness, it has to pay very little for its requirements. Sahajānand inculcated no doubt the Bhakti of Kṛishṇa or Hari, but his methods were severely puritanical. The creed is a sort of protest against the epicurean and luxurious practices that have slipped into the Vallabhāchārya mode of worship.

The Swāminārāyaṇ sect: its wealth, its influence, and its tenets.

13. His poem is called कर्मविपाक. Kavi Dalpatram calls it कर्मकथा.
14. His poem is called the Jñān Kakko.
15. His poem is called the Vāgh Vāni.
16. Author of the Rāma Kathā.

To render those who accepted asceticism or Sâdhuship or even service in its temples immune against the temptations of the world and women, he enjoined as a first step abstention from contact with or company of women. No Sâdhu or temple servant (Pâlâ) is allowed to move out of the temple precincts alone. They have to do it always in pairs, even when going for a call of nature, so that one might act as a check on the other. His second injunction was that all varieties of cooked food that might be offered to them must first be mixed up,—bread, rice, pulse, vegetables and sweets—all must be made up into a hotchpotch, and then eaten, so that the sense of taste might be killed. The very simplicity of the cult seems to have acted as a magnet to the poorer classes, for whom it has indeed provided very good spiritual fare. In Kathiawad, it is no uncommon sight to see even Mahomedans (Khojâs) having accepted the Kanthi (necklace made of the beads of Tulsi wood) of Sahajânand. The creed of Sahajânand has brought great light and purity into their lives both by example and precept, and the credit of it is enhanced when we remember that some of the most turbulent and lawless tribes of Kathiawad have been tamed and humanised by the preachings of Sahajânand. The Sâdhus of this Order were learned men and scholars, although some of them came from a very humble origin in life.

Poets of this Order.

The poets of this Order naturally divide themselves into a separate group of which one—Premânand Swâmi—has already been mentioned. The others are,

Brahmānand, Muktānand, Nīskulānand, Manju Kēśānand and Devānand.*

Brahmānand,† who was of humble origin, a Bhāt by caste, was born in a small village near
Brahmānand. Dungarpur, and was known as Lādu Bārot. He passed his childhood at Bhujnagar. Being a Bārot, he had naturally the gift of being able to write poetry. While travelling in Kathiawad, he happened to go to Gadhadā, where he fell in with Sahajānand, and became his disciple at once. He was master of at least three languages, in which he wrote under different assumed names. In Chārāṇī (a bardic dialect peculiar to Bhāts and Bārots) he wrote as Lādu, in Hindi as Shrirang and in Gujarati as Brahmānand. He charmed the Nawab of Junagadh by his verses into allowing him to found a Swāminārāyaṇ temple in that Mahomedan city. Maha-

* Mr. I. I. Maśruwālā, B. A., who has written two articles in the Gujarati (dated 21st and 28th July 1912), divides all the contemporaries of Sahajānand into four groups as under:

1. Muktānand, Brahmānand, Premānand, Nīskulānand, Manju Kēśānand, Devānand and Ādharānand.
2. Achintyānand (Kṛishṇānand), Dayānand, Jnānānand, Bhumānand, Yagnānand, Sukhānand, Ayodhyāprasād.
3. Nityānand, Vasdevānand, Śantānand and Achintyānand.
4. Gopālānand, Muktānand and Nityānand.

Groups (3) and (4) have written Sanskrit works only. Group (2) he dismisses with the remark that they had written only miscellaneous verses and Bhajans.

† A collected edition of his verses is published by the late Motilal Tribhuvandas Fozdar, B.A., LL.B., called the *ब्रह्मानन्दकव्य*.

raja Sayajirao Gâikwâr of Baroda also honoured him. He died at Muli in Kathiawad in A. D. 1849, while acting as the head of the local temple (Mahant). About eight thousand miscellaneous Padas besides other works, is said to have been his literary outturn. His *forte* was preaching (उपदेश), and for driving his preaching home he has used a number of illustrations and instances which show his marvellous grasp and knowledge of social problems

His *forte* was preaching or उपदेश.

and manners and customs.* His power over words, his collocation of words, is

so admirable that the very reading of his verses produces in the reader an indefinable emotion† of pleasure and peacefulness. The Pada given in the footnote, besides being on the lips of the people, embodies the principles which he wants to impress on his hearers.‡

* See especially his Shringâr (erotic) lyrics.

† To realise this read his कृष्णकिर्तननां पदो.

‡ आ तन रंग पतंग सरीखो, जातां वार न लागेजी;
 असंख्य गया धन संपत्ति मेली, तारी नजरो आगेजी;
 अंगे तेल फुल्ले लगाने, माथे छोणां घालेजी;
 जोबन धननुं जोर जणावे, छाती काढी चालेजी;
 जेम उंदरडे दार पीधो, मस्तानो थईं डोलेजी;
 मगहरीमां अंग मरोडे, जेम तेम मुखथी बोलेजी;
 मनमां जाणे मुज सरीखो, रसीओ नहि कोई रागीजी;
 बहारे ताकी रही बिलाडी, लेतां वार न लागेजी;
 आज कालमां हुं तुं करतां, जमडा पकडी जाशेजी;
 ब्रह्मानंद कहे चेत अह्मानी, अंत फजेती थाशेजी.

Muktānand (born A. D. 1761, died A. D. 1824), was originally the chief disciple of Rāmānand. When Sahajānand came to Māngrol in Kathiawad, during the course of his travels, he found him holding an important position under Rāmānand. Sahajānand also lived under the same head for about eight or nine months and was ultimately appointed Gūrū in place of Rāmānand. Muktānand then became his disciple and till the day of his death which took place at Gadhadā about two months after that of Sahajānand, the latter entertained the very warmest feelings of affection and admiration for him. Just as Brahmānand stood up for उपदेश (preaching) so Muktānand did for જ્ઞાન (knowledge).

His forte was knowledge or જ્ઞાન.

Before he became a Sādhu he was known as Mukun-

This body is like the colour of Sappan wood, it will disappear in no time. Before your very eyes innumerable persons have gone away leaving their riches and wealth behind. You who rub sweet smelling oils on your body (use cosmetics), put on aigrettes, make a display of your youth and wealth, and strut about with expanded chests (like athletes) resemble a drunken rat, waving his head to and fro with intoxication. You stretch your limbs in pride and give vent to any unmeaning words from your mouth, thinking that there is no one on the earth to be compared with you, in seeking pleasures and in gratifying senses, not knowing that outside is a cat crouching in readiness, to make a meal of you in no time. While you are thinking of "I and thou," in a day or two the myrmidons of Death will carry you away. Therefore does Brahmānand tell you, O ignorant one, take heed in time or else you would be disgraced in the end.

How he renounced the world. das, under which name he has written some verses called Mukund Bâvani.

From the early age of thirteen he had conceived a fascination for Vairâgya, and when he saw that his parents would not permit him to renounce the world he pretended to be mad and ran away from Dhrâ-gandhrâ, his native place. After living in company of various Sâdhus at Vânkâner and Sardhâr, he ultimately came under the influence of Râmânand at Mângrol, who was so satisfied with him that he gave him a very high post under him.

Amongst his works which in addition to about nine thousand Padas number many, his His Satî Gîtâ. Uddhav Gîtâ has taken a front place. Satî Gîtâ (A. D. 1824) is equally entitled to that honor. In it the poet has described the different kinds of women, married and widowed, and minutely laid down their duties and responsibilities. Married women are divided into corrupt (कुलटा) and chaste (सती) and all those who are unmarried he calls widowed (विधवा). That class includes those who do not burn with their husbands, on account of Jnân, Vairâgya or Bhakti, or on account of their confidence in themselves that they would be able to observe all the duties of a widow, or because they have a son. It also includes a woman, who being of an ascetic nature, has no inclination for enjoyments of the world and hence considers Hari only as her lord. A woman who considers man as below her and therefore remains unmarried, one to whom

Tapas is dear and who is emancipated from desire, one who from her childhood worships Hari is a widow too.* All these women are like Sannyâsis—ascetics or hermits. The whole poem—and it is pretty long—in very minute details describes the various offices which married and widowed women have to fulfil, their practices and their observances are given at great length and it is, on the whole, an entertaining, informing and instructive work, its great beauty being its simplicity of language.

Niśkulânand (alive in A. D. 1821) was a native of Cutch, and belonged to the Viśvakarmâ (architect) caste of Brahmins, and was known in his pre-Sâdhu days as Lâlji. He too was a companion of Sahajânand. He has written about twenty-two poems and three thousand Padas. The most salient feature of his poetry is his insistence of Vairâgya (retirement from the world), and as a specimen of his verses on that subject, some lines are quoted in the footnote from a very popular Pada.†

* It will be noted with what boldness of thought, the poet contemplates for a Hindu woman, lifelong spinsterhood and dedication to God like the nuns of Christian Europe.

† जननी जीवो रे गोपीचंदनी, पुत्रने प्रेयो वैरागजी;
उपदेश आप्यो एणी पेरे, लाग्यो संसारीडो आगजी.—जननी०
धन धन माता रे धुक्ताणी, कहां कठण कक्कजी;
राज साज सुख परहरी, वेगे चाल्या वनजी.—जननी०
* * * *

भलो रे त्याग भरथरी तणो, तजी सोळ्से नारजी,
मंदीर श्रुखा मेली करी, आसन्न कीबलां बहारजी.—जननी०

A very large portion of Manju Keśanānd's writings is still unpublished, lying in manuscript form at Vadatāl. Judging from the very few Padas published, he seems to have entertained a great dislike for false Gûrûs. He says "you are fools and ignorant men, because you lose a game already won," i. e., having secured the boon of being born a human being, in itself a great thing, instead of improving the occasion, you hear the sermons of false Sâdhus, who see no sin in corruption and adultery, and are misled and miss the benefit of the position.*

If any poet out of this group is best known to and most popular with those who do not follow the tenets of Sahajānand, it is Devānand. His Padas have been carried from village to village and

All honour to the mother of Gopichand who preached to him the beauty of Vairāgya. She instructed him in such a way that he felt the world to be like a burning fire. All honor to the mother of Dhruva who spoke harsh words to him so that leaving his kingdom and his happiness he betook himself to a forest. Admirable is the retirement of Bharthari, who left his sixteen hundred queens, who left his palace and his balconies, and took up his residence outside (in the streets).

* नर तन पामी, हायों जीती बाजी मूढ अज्ञानी;
खोटा संत तणी शीखामण, तें अन्तरमां सत्य मानी०
कामी कोधी गुरु तुने एम कहे छे, तारो देहमांथी प्रभु रहे छे,
तु बहारथी शुं शोधे छेनर तन पामी०
एम कही परनारी संग करे, करी चेला तेजुं द्रव्य हरे;
तेजुं पाप हैयामां नव धरे.....नर तन पामी०

city to city, by those itinerant beggars who claim to ask for something in charity in return for their having sung to you some holy words or chanted a pious verse.

His garbis, like those of Dayârâm, are set to music and sung by the women of Surat and Baroda and his garbis. in the fine moonlight nights of the first half of Aświn every year. Every native of Gujarat must have at one time or other heard one or other of the following verses from the lips of some travelling mendicant or strolling minstrel, and been struck by their truth and sincerity as well as by their "spiciness".*

* (a) कर प्रभु संगाये दृढ प्रीतडी रे, मरी जावुं मेली धनमाल;

अन्तकाळे सगुं नहि कोईनुं रे.

संस्कारे संबंधी सर्वे मळ्यां रे, ए छे जूटी माया केरी जाळ, अन्तकाळे.

मारुं मारुं करीने धन मेळव्युं रे, तेमां तारुं नथी तलभार, अन्तकाळे.

सुख स्वप्ना जेवुं छे संसारनुं रे, तेने जातां न लागे वार; अन्तकाळे.

Love God only, you have to leave your riches here and die; at the hour of death, there will be no relative (to help you). No one, however dear, will help you. Destiny has brought to you your relatives, but it is all a false net of Mâyâ (delusion). You accumulated wealth, saying "it is mine, it is mine," but really not even a pie of it belongs to you. Worldly happiness is a dream, it vanishes in no time.

(b) दुनीआमां डाखो डहापणमां दुःख पामे.

One who considers himself wise, suffers in this world by his wisdom.

(c) अज्ञानी तारा अन्तरमां देख विचारी,

अंत समे कोई काम न आवे, सगां कुटुंब नरनारी—अज्ञानी.

जोबन धननुं जोर जणावे, फाटी आंखे फरतो,

काळ कराळ कठण शिर वेरी, दिलमां केम नथी डरतो रे—अज्ञानी.

Mulji Bhat was alive in Samvat year 1881, A. D. 1825.

Mulji Bhat. His father's name was Bhai Bhat, and he belonged to Ahmedabad. His poem

is called नरसिंह महेताना पिताजुं श्राद्ध.

Besides Mirānbāi, the flame of Bhakti has been kept alive by other women, who flourished towards the latter end of the last century.

Poetesses, It is true that they cannot be named in the same breath with the Rajput Queen of Mewad, nor looking to the long interval of time that separated them could continuity of inspiration be presumed in the case of these lesser lights.

Mirān's performance was bold, unequalled, original. There was nothing in her and their creditable work.

literary surroundings to nurture or even create that emotional poetic sense which manifested itself

माल खजाना मंदिर मेली, मुआ भूप मदभाता,
श्वान शुकरना देह धरीने, घरघर गोथां खाता रे—अज्ञानी०
आज अमुलख अवसर आव्यो, हरि भजवानुं टाणुं,
देवानंद कहे देह मनुष्यनो, न मळे खरचे नाणुं रे—अज्ञानी०

O you fool, look into your heart and ponder over this. At the last moment, no one, neither your relatives, family nor wife would be of any use to you. You parade before the world your youth and riches and strut about with defiant eyes, but why are you not afraid of death, that terrible and cruel foe who hovers over your head? Even powerful kings had to die leaving their riches and treasures and palaces, and (because of not having worshipped God) be reborn as dogs and pigs, driven from one door to another. To-day you have got an invaluable occasion, and to-day is the time for Hari Bhajan. Devānanad says, that even if one were to spend a fortune, one would not be able to secure human birth.

so vividly in her work. Intense religious emotionalism from inside made her burst out into sweet song. Not so with these latter day poetesses. The very atmosphere which they breathed was charged with the spirit of their writings. Their male confreres were actually—unlike as in the days in which Mirānbāi lived—engaged in the very work which they merely shared with them. But all honor is due to them, as when there was darkness all around, so far as female education was concerned, they by means and efforts, best known to themselves, procured the light of learning sufficient to enlighten their minds and scatter brightness outside. Divālibāi, Rādhābāi, Krishṇābāi, Puribāi and Gavribāi, though judged by an absolute standard have turned out verses of a very mediocre, if not of quite an inferior quality, still are entitled to an honourable mention for doing that which, all over the world, very few women have done.

Divālibāi was the daughter of a Brahmin living in Dabhoi. From her poems it appears that after the death of her husband she probably returned to her father's house, and he in the great famine of Samvat year 1847 (A. D. 1791), finding himself unable to maintain both of them, left her in the care of an aged Sādhu and disappeared. In her verses she calls this Sādhu, Dādā Gārū Bhagvān. They lived for sometime at the village of Golvā and then at Baroda. She often went to Ayodhyā on pilgrimage with him. The Sādhu was a Rāmabhakta or devotee of

and her Gārū.

Rāma, and in his society, in Divālibāi too was generated a love for Rāma. Her pure life and intense devotion got her many followers, one of whom built for her a temple for the worship of Rāma (Rāma Mandir). In spite of her having left the world, individuals suspecting her chastity were not wanting. One such scandal-monger, however, met with such an accidental and instantaneous death that people thought her reputation completely vindicated. In

Her pilgrimages. spite of it however she came to the conclusion, that life in a Rāma Mandir at Baroda would greatly interfere with her devotional worship of the deity, and she left the city for good for Ayodhyā. The Sādhu had taught her the whole of the Rāmāyaṇ, and consequently all her poetry is taken up with the depiction of incidents in the life of the Prince of Ayodhyā. His birth, marriage and coronation have furnished her with themes on which she has dilated in about five hundred short poems. Her portraiture of the instincts of a woman is indeed very faithful. When in his old age, Daśarath,

the father of Rāma, found that his three
 Her faithful picture of women's characteristics. queens were in a position to continue

his line, he was so pleased that he asked them to desire anything from him and he would give it. And, though so highly situated, what did they demand? It is common knowledge amongst women that, when they are pregnant, they crave for actual rubbish, earth, ashes and such deleterious substances. And what was the surprise of the king, when yielding to that common failing

of their sex, one demanded a handful of earth, the other tiles and the third ashes ?*

Looking at her poetry from a higher plane, it must be said that it is pure as she has selected as ^{Her verses are pure in thought and simple in language.} her hero the pure personality of Râma, thus presenting a refreshing contrast to other poets who selected the amours of Krishṇa for their theme. Its language is simple, and it inculcates the principle that the worship of Râma alone is the way to salvation, and that Râma is pleased merely by Bhakti—by recitation of his Bhajans—and that those saints who adore him are free from caste prejudices, that they do not hanker after money perquisites or alms, that Râma loves good conduct, and that in his eyes, rich and poor, married persons and widowers are equal.

She was so immersed in her devotion to Râma that ^{She welcomes widow-hood.} she even welcomed her widowhood, as it gave her an occasion to concentrate her mind only on one thing, unperturbed by other worldly ties or considerations.† Her poetry is an echo of her life, simple and pure.

* These instances can be multiplied. For instance, the dialogue between Râma and Sītâ, on the eve of the coronation day, as to what color she should choose for her Sâri for that auspicious occasion, when she rejects one colour after another, and ultimately selects rose, is such as can strike a woman only.

† She says:—

મટે ભવોભવનાં દુઃખ, રામજી કહીએ રે;
આજ તમ પામ્યાં સુખ, રામજી કહીએ રે;

Rádhábái was a Dakshni Brahmin lady of Baroda. She was the pupil of a Sádhu, Avadhútnáth, and was a devotee of Rádhá Krishna. When in Baroda, she lived in the temple of Rámanáth, but she went away often on pilgrimages to the north and to Dwárká. She was alive in Samvat year 1890 (A. D. 1834) and died about twenty three years later. Her beauty and voice attract people. She is described as of a fair complexion with a beautiful figure always dressed in white. Having a very good command over several musical instruments, and possessing a sweet voice, she is said to have attracted a large following of Vais̥navas, by means of singing to the accompaniment of music. Her Garbis and poems are recited by many persons.

A defect in her poetry is its language, which is neither unadulterated Gujarati, Marathi nor Hindi. It is a curious mixture of the three, and unless one knows all the three languages, it is difficult to follow her. She has narrated several features of the life of Krishna and written short biographies of some saints like Vithobá, Karmábái, Miránbái, Jnáneshwar, Tukárám and others.*

Language of her
verses mixed.

थई विधवा पाम्यां भजन, रामजी कहीए रे;
एवी विधवा जुगोजुग, रामजी कहीए रे;
दीवाळी करीए तमारं भजन, रामजी कहीए रे.

Note the mixed language of the following :—

Being a great traveller, she has given us in a descriptive way, particulars of some places visited by her. Her poetry is rough but full of force and directness. She is supposed to have died in A. D. 1857.

Krishnábái was a Nāgar Brahmin by caste and belonged to Vadnagar. Her "Lullabies for Krishna" (*कृष्णनां झरुहों*) and "The Bodice of Sītá" (*सीताजीनी कांचळी*) are well known to women of Gujarat. The story in respect of the Bodice is common knowledge. Marich, a colleague of Rāvaṇ, in the shape of a golden deer attracted Sītá's attention in the forest near Panchavati, and yielding to the weakness of her sex, she thought of making a bodice of the skin of that deer. For that purpose she sent Rāma to chase it and when some time after she heard cries of distress she concluded that they must be those of her husband, whom she had sent on the chase, much against his will, as he did not want to leave her alone. While going Rāma had extracted a promise from his brother that he would on no account leave Sītá unguarded. But thinking her husband in distress, she forced Lakṣman to go to his succour by means of

Her verses well known.

तुकाराम बडा,^(a) सारा भक्त;^(b)

थई गया बडा^(a) सशक्त;^(c)

जाकुं^(a) जाणे सघळा जक्त;^(b)

जे^(b) इहुबामें हे^(a) रक्त; तुकाराम तोळ्या.^(c)

(a) Hindi. (b) Gujarati. (c) Marathi.

taunts and thus unwittingly left the field open to Rávan for her abduction. The dialogues between Sítá and Ráma and Sítá and Lakśman are couched in such homely but forcible language that they present a vivid picture of what an obstinate wife, a yielding husband and a dutiful brother are like.

Puribái has celebrated the marriage of Sítá in verse.

Puribái. The poem is named Sítá Mangal, and is both simple and dignified.

Gavribái, born in Samvat year 1815 (A. D. 1759) hailed

Gavribái from Dungarpur, and was a Nâgar Brahmin by caste. She was married at the age of five or six, and lost her husband a few days after her marriage. She thereupon took God to be her husband, and by dint of perseverance learnt to read and write and studied the Bhâgavat and other philosophical treatises. She was able to attain Jnân (knowledge) and Vairâgya (asceticism). She was able to practise Samâdhi (*i. e.*, concentrate her mind on the Supreme Being and enter into a spiritual trance). Her ascetic mode of life attracted towards her the attention of the princes of Dungarpur, Jeypur and Benares. She changed her residence from her native place to Benares, where she died. This is the only Védanti poetess in Gujarat, her counterpart being Akho. Unlike his style, hers is such as can be understood even by the uneducated. Her illustrations are homely. For instance she compares the pervading of the Parabrahma in the Universe to the

existence of smell in a flower, or to that of light in the sun. She has composed about six hundred fifty-two Padas.*

Out of the three monarchs who share the throne of Gujarati letters, Dayâram has been reserved till the last. Just as the van was gloriously led by Narsinh, the centre by Premânand, so the rear is fitly brought up by Dayâram. In reaching its full stature, in being able to touch the stars, Gujarati literature is equally indebted to all three and in the precious poetry of Dayâram the waning lamp of Gujarati classical verse, made a last splendid effort, produced a final flash before its light vanished.

Dayâram has furnished an apt subject of controversy by his life, worldly and literary. There have been those who have not looked with approval on his connexions with the other sex, which they think were not Platonic relationships, and there have been others who have defended them on the ground of domestic expediency. In his literary life, he has been compared to Hafiz, the Persian Anacreon, to Byron, the gifted poet of England with loose morals, and to Surdâs, the devotional Hindi poet.

* A very instructive paper was read on "The poetesses of Gujarat" by Mrs. Vidyâ Ramanbhai B.A., before the Third Gujarati Sahitya Parishad at Rajkote in 1909. I have drawn upon the paper in preparing this account.

Dayâram,* whose original name was Dayâshanker, which he is said to have changed to Dayâram, on his ceasing to be a follower of Śankar, and passing into the Val-labhâchârya fold, was born at Chândod, on the banks of the Narmadâ in A. D. 1767, and was a Sâthodarâ Nâgar Brahmin. He was left an orphan at the early age of thirteen, his father having predeceased his mother by a year. He had then acquired a rudimentary knowledge of accounts, and reading and writing Gujarati, and was on the point of being sent to Baroda to supplement it by a study of Sanskrit when his father died. Thenceforth he lived with an aunt of his till he was about 19 (or 20) years old. He left Chândod for Dabhoi on her death.

The tradition is that he was betrothed when he was about eight years old, and that the girl died within two years of the betrothal. No one was found thereafter willing to entrust his daughter to him, his poverty being one of the causes. He too was unwilling to be tied down to one woman for life. He died an old bachelor.

* A number of attempts have been made to ascertain the particulars of the life of this poet, the pioneer being Kavi Narmadâshanker. Of the others, the sketch given by Ichharam Suryaram Desai who too tried to obtain firsthand information, is fuller and more detailed than that of Rao Bahadur Hargovandas Dwârkâdâs Kântâvâlâ, published in the Prâchin Kâvyâ Malâ. Mr. Tribhowandas Shet's life of Dayâram is merely a compilation based on the three sketches, with here and there, a statement thrown in by way of elucidation.

As a youth, from the age of fourteen and upwards, he seems to have imitated the juvenile escapades attributed to his favourite ideal, Krishna. The women of Chāṇḍod are known all over Gujarat for possessing a number of attractions special to their sex. They are fair, well built (they know how to swim), beautiful, full of grace, boldness and have captivating qualities. Dayārām's sole delight was to make mischief with them, and with that view he gathered round him a band of likeminded mischievous boys, who made it their business to throw pebbles at or use other devices to tease those women who frequented the ghāts on the banks of the Narmadā to fetch water.* The modest amongst them, would ignore the pranks played by the boys, but at times the latter met with those who were a match for them. One day, a woman of the goldsmith caste, had the chatty on her head broken by Dayārām. Losing her temper, she caught him by his dhotar and demanded from him the price of her pot. Dayārām was not possessed of a single pie, and seeing his own mistake, solicited hard to be released. But the woman would not budge an inch. Some of his own castemen thereupon, urged him to commit further violence, saying should a

* This pleasant occupation of paying uncalled for attention to women is not confined to Chāṇḍod alone. Almost all ghāts similarly situated, and the neighbourhood of wells, are infested with bands of youths, gaily inclined, who take delight in whiling away their leisure moments in the manner of Dayārām.

Nâgar yield to a goldsmith? This taunt put some spirit into the boy and in the excitement of the moment, he slapped his assailant. Some one carried the news to her husband, who came running to the spot, hammer in hand. But in the meanwhile, Dayârâm had managed to get his loincloth freed from her grasp and run away. While everybody thought that he had committed suicide by drowning in the river, he had hidden himself in Karnâli, a village within a stone's throw of Chândod. There he fell in with a Sâdhu, Keśavânand, whom he entreated to accept him as his disciple. The Sâdhu declined, looking to his very young age. The boy misconstrued his motives, and sang them in a Lâvṇi (song), wherein he maintained that Sâdhus eschewed young men as their disciples, as they were afraid that such youths would alienate from them—the Sâdhus—the affections of young women, whose company they were fond of enjoying in secret. When it was recited before Keśavânand, he merely laughed and said that the boy was an ignoramus. He did not know the virtue and strength of Sâdhus and that he would be made to see it some day. Two months later, Dayârâm happened to swim over to Karnâli—when Keśavânand caught him, and at night, through the instrumentality of his spiritual powers made him see Krishṇa, in body. This miracle converted him into a devotee of Krishṇa.*

* He is said to have acknowledged Keśavânand as his gûru from this time, and composed a Pada, गुरु म्होय गुरु म्होय, in respect of it.

The spirit of mischief did not leave him even when he grew older. It is usual for pilgrims to proceed to Chândod to bathe in the sacred river at the time of an eclipse. For such a purpose, once, the ladies of H. H. The Gâikwâr Fatesinhrao's family had come down to Chândod. Guards were placed on the road to keep off males, while the Zenana ladies went for their bath. Dayâram took it into his head to disobey the order, and continued to sit on the ghât, in company of a small boy, who knew very well how to play on the Sitâr and who possessed a sweet, musical voice. Dayâram took up his own guitar or Tamburâ, and played on it. The ladies were so charmed with the singing and playing that they came forward and held out some gold coins, thinking that they must be some beggar Brâhmins. Dayâram declined to take them, saying he would not accept anything till he was sure that the donor was a person from whom he could with self-respect accept a Dakshinâ (perquisite). The Râni thereupon removed her veil and offered him gold mohurs. Dayâram generously said, give them to the boy. On the news reaching Baroda, an invitation was sent to him from the Court to go there. He complied with it, but owing to some political disturbance, he was not given a warm reception and he determined thereafter, never to trust princes or their servants.

The poet was blessed by nature with attractive features. Fair, tall, slim and well built, with a voice beautifully adapted for

singing, he had added to these attractions several others which were in every way calculated to commit havoc in the ranks of the fair sex.*

In dress his refined taste bordered almost on dandyism.

and refined taste
in dress,

He got his turban dyed at Nadiád, and paid so much as five rupees for each dyeing, the ordinary rate being from four to eight annas! His silk bordered dhotars cost him from ten to twelve Rupees each, while the fine transparent malmal (Daccá Mull) cloth of which his coats were made was supplemented by embroidery work of thread, at the sleeves and neck. His tailor's bill was very high. He paid so high a price as three rupees for the making of an angarkhâ-coat-and if the fit was not proper, it was not unusual for him to visit his wrath on the tailor by something more effective than words. In arranging the front folds of his dhoti he was so finical that he used to spend half an hour over the operation! His Dupattâ (scarf or shoulder cloth) and embroidered shoes were specimens of daintiness. So much refinement and taste could not fail

* He is thus described by Kavi Narmadáshanker—Dayáram was thin and taller (than myself). His face was not round, but like mine, long. The nose was straight and pointed—aquiline at the end. His eyes were grey, but very restless, and forehead though receding from above the temples still projected forward a little, the moustaches were full and curved at the ends. He grew no whiskers. The color of his skin was fairer than wheat, still it was so transparent that the red color of the juice of pân leaves could be seen through his throat when he chewed them.

to make their mark on the other sex, and his biographers have given at least four to five instances of high born ladies, who in their old age were not ashamed to own their past intimacy with him.* Till forty, his tastes and his loose-

ness of morals had not deserted him, but thereafter he settled down to a life of sobriety,† selecting the company of

one of his most faithful admirers, a goldsmith's child-widow Ratanbâi, who kept house for him, who nursed him through his worst illnesses—and he was often ailing—and who survived him several years. This episode in the poet's career, though originating in an improper connection, is still one of the most redeeming features in their joint lives. From several autobiographical

Relations between Ratanbâi and Dayâram. fragments, preserved by his followers, it appears that she was left a widow and an orphan at the age of nine, and was much oppressed by her relatives-at-law. He picked her up on the banks of the Narmadâ, and for thirty years they lived together

* Some of his own castemen excused these liaisons on the ground of Dayâram being a companion of Krishṇa (Krishṇa had eight companions called (अष्टसखा), Dayâram was said to be the ninth), whom he had sent specially into the world to demonstrate what Râsa Lîlâ was.

† The reason which forced him to sobriety is said to be the following incident. As was usual with him while at Baroda, he once put up in the house of an admirer of his. His wife was devotedly waiting on him but Dayâram took the service in another light and wanted to force her into his embraces. She cried out, and Dayâram had at once to take to the stairs and run away. This experience proved to be a great eye-opener

through good report and evil. He said that in a former birth, she was his wife and was rejected by him as she used to treat him badly! She was expiating for it by her widowhood in this birth. Excepting for being unable to eat the food cooked by her,* owing to the difference in their castes, she was the mistress of his household for all practical purposes. Owing to his sharp temper and also

Her toleration of his
sharp temper.

owing to the excitability of his nature due to prolonged and complicated illness†

Ratanbái was often subjected to physical pain,‡ but she quietly bore it all. On one occasion however she could not bear his abuse and assaults and had to leave his roof. Dayáram's position then became intensely pathetic, and through the intervention of a friend she was induced to come back, specially as the poet had taken the bereavement so much to heart, that she was told that unless she chose to come back he would die. His last and fatal illness brought out her best qualities as a nurse. During the last seven or eight years of his life his eye

* Dayáram was an excellent cook himself, and he knew how to prepare several toothsome dishes. He used to cook for himself and her.

† A catalogue of Dayáram's ailments would almost make a medical hand-book.

‡ Once Dayáram was being led by her: his eyesight had become feeble and he used to move about with his hand on her shoulder. He somehow or other slipped, and losing temper he soundly cuffed her ears, but she, good woman that she was, unmindful of his assault busied herself in bandaging his sprained ankle and soothing him.

sight had suffered, and for the last two or three years before his death, he was blind.

He himself in describing her, has bestowed on her the epithet of his "sharer in weal and woe." Thrice did he take her with him for pilgrimage, and even there she served him so well, that he felt himself unable to express his full obligation to her. His last words of advice to his followers were that they should look after her when he was no more, but unfortunately she was not spared annoyance at the hands of the poet's relatives after his death. As it was, the poet was a poor man, but still he had managed to give a small sum to her, of which she was deprived by a cousin of his. She died in distress and penury about fourteen years after him.

It is not as if Dayārām was unaware of the scandal created by his mode of life. He was directly asked by some as to what he meant by retiring with young women alone, and allowing them to almost worship him. He said he knew scandal was being talked about him, but so it was about Krishṇa at Mathurá. The women did come to him and in spite of his protests, placed flowers before him, shampooed his feet, and altogether treated him as if he was a god. But his feelings towards them were pure. His sole object was to lift them out of their state of worldly sins and make them one with Krishṇa. He composed a poem admitting his adultery but it was adultery with Kri-

Ratanbái's last days,
clouded and sad.

Dayārām's explanation of his irregular life.

shṇa; "the beloved of Dayâ was Krishṇa and the beloved of Krishṇa was this slave girl" (his humble self).*

He was fully aware of the evils arising out of an inordinate love for feminine society, and he has in an admonitory poem warned persons if they desired happiness, to give women a wide berth.†

Between the age of twenty and forty, Dayâram was almost always on the move. He had thrice visited the four great centres of Hindu sanctity, Badrikâśram, Jaggannâth Puri, Râmeśwar and Dwârkâ. Seven times did he visit the sacred shrine at Nâthadwâr, and four times drink the waters of the Jamna. He also had performed that most difficult but meritorious feat of a Hindu pilgrim, taking the waters of the Ganges on his shoulders from the river at Benares, and bathing with them the idol of Śiva at Rameśwar. To Dâkore, he travelled often from Dabhoi and his journeys were always undertaken on foot. At Dâkore, a celebrated character, Ichhârâm Bhat, heard his songs on the banks of the Gomti, and being very pleased with them advised him to add to his pious devo-

* दयानी प्यारी कृष्णजी कहावे, कृष्णनी प्यारी आ दासी;
रसुं, रसाङ्ग, प्रेमे पोहुं, जारी कृष्ण सुं, नहि तो उदासी;
ए व्यभिचार नित करीए रे, एथी भवसागर तरीए रे.

† जे कोइ जन कल्याण चाहो ते स्त्रीनी संगत तजजो रे.

tion by going on a pilgrimage, and he did so accordingly. On his return, Dayārām saw him again, and was given a blessing, and Ichhārām foretold that he would turn out to be a famous poet. In fact, he said Dayārām was no other than an incarnation of Narsinh Mehtá. His faith in Vaiṣṇavism was sincere and deep, and on the first evening of his arrival at Śrī Náthadwár, he sang of and described the details of dress and ornaments on the body of Kṛishṇa, as seen by him in a vision, in such a charming style, that the head of the shrine, the Mahārāj—sent for him and presented him with a costly piece of cloth.* For three months did he continue to sing and play before the idol, and his fellow pilgrims were so charmed by his devotional music that they used to shower presents on him, all of which he gave away to the shrine.

Dayārām has left some descriptions of the suffering he underwent during the course of these peregrinations, as well as the miracles he witnessed. After worshipping the Mahá-káleśwar, his party was proceeding towards Násik. For five days, they met with nothing untoward, but on the sixth day, at a distance of about twenty kos from Âsirgarh,

** The Mahārāj kept him there specially for three months, under orders of the god, as he said. One day, the god was so pleased with him that he showed him in a vision the actual Rása Lílá—a performance witnessed by Narsinh Mehta too. Dayārām was greatly pleased at this mark of special favour and sang so graphically that the Mahārāj bestowed on him that precious piece of cloth.

while taking their midday meal, they were visited by what appeared to be a band of pilgrims. The two parties, then, travelled together for five or six miles, till they came to a lonely spot, where the so called pilgrims fell upon Dayâ-râm's friends and began to rob and murder them. Three were killed and the rest taken as prisoners to Hyderabad. After committing some excesses there, they returned to Âsirgarh. There they called upon the poet to pay Rs. 500 as the price of his release. He said he was an orphan, had no family, and no relatives who could honor his hundi. He knew only his god Krishna, who might honor his letter as he had done that of Narsinh Mehta. No one believed him and for five months, his trials continued. He dreamt one night that Krishna was thus punishing him for the desire he had once expressed at Vrindâvan, to leave the scene of his (Krishna's) revels and return home. During this state of dreaminess, he says he solicited his god by means of a poem* and he awoke. He thereafter saw the head of this band of robbers, and faithfully told him his life history and began to sing devotional songs. The robber chief was charmed, and promised to let him go in three days. Every night the chief listened to his songs, and true to his word, either through the influence of his god, or the charm of his Bhajans he allowed him to depart, giving him money to defray his travelling expenses. At

* श्रीजी शरण पब्जाने शोद संतापो?

O, Shriji, why do you annoy one who seeks refuge at your feet?

Bālāji in the Madras Presidency, the Mahant of the temple was in the habit of extorting money from pilgrims, and would not allow them to leave till they had satisfied his demands. Dayārām was also set upon, and being unable to pay, absconded at night. The Mahant sent men in pursuit, who brought him back. He was not allowed to go till after four days during which time, on inquiry, the Mahant was fully satisfied that Dayārām had no money. He thence went to Rāmeśwar where he entered into a controversy with a Sādhu, who was a follower of Śiva, as to whether Śiva or Kṛishṇa was the greater. The Sādhu called Kṛishṇa an adulterer and Dayārām called Śiva a wretch of an ascetic (जोगरो). The Sādhu losing temper, assaulted Dayārām with his lāthi (stick). But a miracle happened, The lāthi was suspended in mid air, and the Sādhu became dumb-founded. Dayārām says that every one present there, said that it was Kṛishṇa who was holding it aloft. His opponent, thereafter, gave up his contention, and acknowledged that Hari (Kṛishṇa) and Hara (Śiva) were but one and the same. It took him nearly seven years to finish this pilgrimage.

Although he was a keen Vaiśṇava, he had a great horror of bowing his head before the Mahārājas,* in abject subjection, like the rest of their followers. He had taken

His dislike of Vaiśṇava Mahārājas,

* The high priests of the Vallabhāchārya sect are so called.

a vow of Páki Marjád,* but that did not make him pay any very exaggerated respect to those who were at the head of the creed. Twice had such Mahárájas had to eat humble pie in trying to force Dayárám to bow to their orders. Once his own Maháráj, Purushottamji, from Bundi Kota had to come on a visit to Dabhoi and while there misled by his followers he forbid Dayârám the temple. This is a very severe penalty on a Vaiśṇava. Dayárám thereupon composed a poem, satirizing the Maháráj. It was read by some of those who had incited him to place the ban. They informed him of it. The Maháráj was greatly struck by his boldness, and went to call on him at his house, but Dayárám shut the doors in his face, and returned to him the necklace of Tulsi beads, the emblem of his being a Vaiśṇava. The Maháráj saw his mistake and admitted it, and returned him the necklace. On another occasion when another Maháráj came to Dabhoi, all the Vaiśṇavas went to him to pay their respects (in coin), but not so Dayârám. He was specially sent for but he sent word that and their open insults, he would come only on condition that his seat should not be lower than the Mahàrāja's, as he was in no way inferior to him. The Maháráj took great offence at this, but still complied with his demand. Dayârám, before starting, had sent a man of

* One who takes this vow, which is an element in the observance of the extremest form of Vaiśṇavism, can eat food cooked by himself alone. He has to eschew the touch of many things and of all persons, excepting on the penalty of a bath after such contact.

his to inquire whether his gâdi (seat) was placed just like the Mahârâja's and was told that it was so. On his arrival, when he was going to sit on the gâdi a follower of the Mahârâj at once took it away, and Dayârâm's wrath knew no bounds. He abused the Mahârâj to his face, took off the necklace there and then and tore it in two, and threw the pieces into the hands of the very man who had gone to call him on behalf of the Mahârâj, saying contemptuously, "here is your necklace worth two farthings." The Mahârâj felt some remorse at his own action, and called on Dayârâm at his house, but he met with the same fate as his predecessor and had to return without seeing him. Dayârâm fully believed, and he said as much, that it is not by means of this outward emblem of Vaiṣṇavism—putting on a necklace—that one can be called a Vaiṣṇava. His views as regards the duties of these spiritual leaders were very correct, and much in advance of his times. He knew that they were really responsible for leading their followers into wrong paths. He narrated an incident, once witnessed by him, in connection with a debauched Mahârâj of Kâkroli. This man was in the habit of considering all his female followers as legitimate instruments for gratifying his lust, and exposure of their immoral conduct. and his behaviour when in their midst was most improper and openly indecent. Dayârâm could not brook to see him touching them lustfully, and he said that the eyes which should really rest on Thâkurjee were resting on undesirable

places, but such persons always met with their deserts at last. This Mahârâj, under the impression that he was the husband of all the women in the world once behaved improperly with the wife of a cadet of the Mahârâjâ of Udaipur, and the court at Udaipur coming to know of it at once despatched a hundred horsemen to capture the delinquent, who on hearing the news hastened to Kâkroli from Girirâj, where he had been philandering with his female followers. Dayârâm conceived great hatred for them, he says, from the day he witnessed this misconduct.

His dislike for such leaders of the creed is not to be taken as an index of the faith he had in the creed itself. His works bear an eloquent testimony to his deep-seated belief in the tenets formulated by Vallabhâchârya.

He passed his time mostly at Dabhoi, Baroda and Dâkore. He visited Surât also, but his stay in Broach in his very young days, is doubted by some of his biographers.

Dayârâm was poor all his life. His chief source of income was the perquisites reverently given to him by his admiring disciples. As he had an admirable and musical voice, many were the gatherings to which he was invited. He earned about Rs. 200 per year in this manner, but he was so improvident that he spent all he got. He was both an epicure and a dandy, and besides, his numerous pilgrimages must have taxed his resources to their utmost.

When an Indian dies, a dinner is given to his caste by his heirs. Dayârâm thought that he would forestall his demise, and give the customary dinner.* His numerous disciples at Dabhoi, Chândod, Broach, Umreth and other places came to know of it, and sent him money to enable him to defray the expenses. The presents amounted to Rs. 2,000 and he spent nearly Rs. 4,000 ! Such was his happy-go-lucky nature. The only assets left by him after his death were his books. Ratanbâi had to sacrifice a large portion of her scanty resources, in meeting the charges of his funeral, and in defraying other expenses. Dayârâm would have liked to have royal patronage, but was too proud to bend or bow to the noble or the wealthy to secure it. He was proud to say that his head bowed only to Krishna. He had left all his cares to Krishna.†

A large following of admirers had gathered itself round the poet, from every conceivable part of Gujarat, and from every caste, ranging from the proud and cultured Nâgar Brâhmin to the humble or unlettered Soni (goldsmith).‡ Two of his most devoted disciples Amratrâm

* It is customary for the heirs of a deceased person to give a grand dinner after his death. Some people—mostly wealthy—prefer to give such a feast during their life. It is considered a meritorious act.

† चित तुं शिदने चिन्ता करे, कृष्णने करहुं होय ते करे.

‡ The names of the most noted amongst them are: Joshi Râjchhod, an Audich Brahmin, Manordas, a Lâd Bania of Broach, Girjashanker Joshi and Lakshmiram Desai, Brahmins, Trikamdas, a Bania, Ghelabhai Amin, a Pâtidar, Vasantram, Lallubhai, Kâyasthas, Mohanbhai, a Pâtidar, Pritamlal, a Zârolâ Bania, and Nâran, a Soni.

Pandya, and Dayābhāi, Sāthodrá Nāgar, although they held high posts, renounced the world, to sit at his feet. Raṇchhod was his last disciple. The discipleship began when

Dayārām's many
disciples,

Dayārām was sixty and Raṇchhod only fifteen. He went to Dayārām, to sing some of his songs. The poet was so pleased with his voice, and his mode of singing, that he instantly gave him a place amongst the ranks of his followers, and afterwards placed him at their head. When the boy was threatened by his creditors, after the death of his father, Dayārām undertook to satisfy them and he did so. His advice both to him and Girjāshanker was, that they should earn their livelihood by singing his songs. Dayārām possessed nothing more precious than his books and his Tamburā. The former he bequeathed to Raṇchhod, and the latter to Vasantrām, on his death-bed, and Vasantrām worshipped it as if it was a god. The minute description given by his friend Chimanlāl as gathered from the lips of those who watched and nursed him in his last days, brings into prominent relief, the touching part played

and their exemplary
devotion to him.

by Raṇchhod, Vasantrām, Ghelābhāi and Ratanbāi. The two former were unremitting in their efforts to soothe his last moments by singing and music, and Ghelābhāi and Ratanbāi by washing and cleaning him. The services they rendered were such as even Dayārām's nearest relatives would not have performed. At Baroda, Dabhoi, Dākore, wherever he chanced to be, his followers always received

him with open arms. But in spite of all this devotion and admiration, Dayârâm kept his head cool. He was asked by Raṇchhod permission to worship his Pāduka* (wooden sandals) after him, which would have been tantamount to founding a new creed. He stoutly resisted the demand, saying "Who am I? You should never talk of it again."

Haribhat of Baroda, who already has been mentioned, was for a time, a rival of Dayârâm. He used to compose songs and poems on the same lines as Dayârâm's, and this made the latter very angry. Moreover, the followers of each began to laud their own favourite to the skies, and this gave greater publicity to Haribhat's works. Dayârâm was resolved to put him down, and in a day composed one hundred poems, an output which completely beat Haribhat, and when one of Dayârâm's songs† was thereafter sung, and his discomfiture. in the well known house of the leading citizen of Baroda, Haribhakti, the audience with one voice acclaimed it and said that there could be no comparison between Haribhat and Dayârâm.

Dayârâm's great mastery over the science of music and singing was put to an unusual test once. He was pressed to be present at a party, where his two disciples Raṇ-

Dayârâm's mastery
over music,

* This is a kind of deification of the owner of the sandals.

† માનિતી મોહન તળી, ઓ બાંસલડી રે.

chhod and Girjāshanker were performing to the accompaniment of the music of Narghān* and Sārangi recitations of some of his own Padas at Baroda. During the course of the entertainment, Girjāshanker happened to play a wrong time on the Narghān, and a Bāvā (ascetic) who was sitting amongst the audience twitted him on it, putting Girjāshanker to shame. Dayārām could not bear it, and so he said, every one was liable to err, and so was Girjāshanker, and after all, that mistake was not of any very great moment. The Bāvā demurred, and said that he who had acquired mastery over his craft would never err. Dayārām, impetuous as he was, there and then challenged him to demonstrate his unfailing mastery. The latter accepted the challenge, and seizing hold of the Narghān began to play to the accompaniment of Dayārām's singing. Dayārām by means of various tricks, tried to deviate him from the correct time, but the Bāvā was a thorough master of his art, and baffled all his attempts to make him play the wrong time. The contest lasted long, and became very lively, and a large concourse of men was attracted to witness this musical duel of two masters. The night was passing into dawn, but the combatants were still evenly measured. Dayārām was already losing heart, but at last he made a final grand effort, and sang a song full of such intricate

* These are two drum like instruments, played by the palm and fingers of the hand.

साठ (measures of time), that the Bāvā was thrown off his guard and for once played wrongly. The

His triumph.

crowd cheered and clapped but Dayārām rose to the occasion, and congratulated him, saying he had never seen such a perfect player before, and as a token of his regard for his knowledge and ability, as impulsively as he had thrown out the challenge, took his gold necklace from off his neck and made a present of it to the Bāvā.

For nearly a dozen years prior to his death, Dayārām

Dayārām's chronic
ill-health.

was a martyr to chronic illness. In his youth, extensive travel is supposed to have done his constitution some good.

His ordinary food consisted of double the usual quantity, but latterly, at times he used to subsist upon half a pound of milk only. The multiplicity of his diseases has already been noticed, but so strong was his will that in spite of all if he once settled down for an entertainment with his Tamburā or to worship, for five or six hours at a stretch, he would become entirely forgetful of his malady, and concentrate his attention on the subject in hand. At the end of it, a reaction would set in, weakness of the kidneys and laxity of the bowels would supervene and out of sheer exhaustion, he would lie down and rest. The entreaties and persuasions of his friends and followers to place himself under medical treatment, always proved fruitless. His reply to them was the stock reply of all Hindus: "the body has to bear pain and it does its duty in doing so. I am (my soul is) unaffected by it."

A somewhat detailed diary of the last fifteen days of his fatal illness has been published in Day&ram's last illness his biographies. The pain he suffered was immense, and even Ratanbâi's nursing was unequal to alleviating it. As long as his strength lasted he struggled to observe the usual routine of the worship of his household gods, but he had ultimately to give in and be content with listening to hymns recited by Ranchhod and others. He suffered from hernia, fistula and hydrocele, but though racked with pain he consoled himself by composing poetry. Every day made him weaker, and when he saw that his end was near he gave minute instructions.

(1) as to the way in which his dead very painful.

body was to be laid on ground which was to be made holy by being covered with the sands and the waters brought by him from the Jamna, mixed with cow dung procured from the stables of Śrī Nâthadwâr, and sprinkled with the waters of all the holy places preserved by him specially for this occasion, and spread over with pieces of Tulsi wood and its leaves, (2) as to the person who was to light the funeral pyre. He gave strict in-

Minute instructions about his funeral. junctions that no one was to weep after him, but that his bier was to be carried

to the burning ground amid great rejoicings. By special permission, obtained from him during his lifetime, his body was covered over with a shawl, instead of the ordinary red funeral cloth. The use of such costly stuff is in vogue, only in case of rich and distinguished

people, and Dayáram disliked the show, but he had to yield to the earnest entreaties of Ghelábhái, who insisted on his being allowed to show this last mark of respect to his gûrû. His very last moments were happy, and he passed away while unconscious. Nearly two hundred men followed his remains to the burning ground. He died at 9 A. M., on the 9th of February, 1852 A. D.

Dayáram was an early riser. He would leave his bed at about five in the morning and take Routine of daily life. an early bath, after which he would be engaged in the worship of the likeness of Śrīji and the idol of Bálamukund, till about ten. It is strange that in spite of weak kidneys and bowels, the four hours that he spent thus were free from pain. He was very particular about not being interrupted at the time of worship. If any one disturbed him so much the worse for the intruder: sometimes he got a thrashing. At about 11 A. M. he would start cooking, the materials for which would be kept ready by Ratanbái. Thereafter both of them would sit down to take their meals together.* In the afternoon he would sit down alone to work, viz., composing poetry and no one was allowed to trespass on his retirement. In the evening, the men of Dabhoi would gather round him, and he would then give full reins to his devotion, and in their company, dance, clap, jump and sing. At times, he was so overpowered by his emotions that tears would actually flow from his eyes.

* He used to take only one meal during the day.

By nature, he was irascible. There was a vein of vanity running in him in his early days, which later gave way to sobriety. Independent in spirit, money had no attractions for him, and he never truckled to any one or bent his knee or head to any individual, to get money, patronage or favours. Generous to the verge of improvidence, he left nothing behind him but his books, and he was conscious of the fact that they were worth millions.* In spite of his short temper, he was able to make many friends, and the devotedness of Ratanbâi whom he abused, beat, assaulted and drove away, under the influence of sharpness of temper, furnishes a proof of the fact, that there must have been some traits in his character, some sterling virtues, which made him lovable in spite of his bad temper.

* He had made this remark to Ranchhod, whom he had asked to sing the songs composed by him, as they would appear to be worth millions to those who understood them. But he was not so sure that the literature produced by him would survive long. During the last illness, he was once found staring out of the window at some object, for a very long time. Vasāntrām and Ratanbâi were near him, and the former asked him twice or thrice what was there on the road to attract his gaze. Dayāram pointed out a broken brick, and said that he had been seeing it there for the last six months, and every day it was losing in size, as particle after particle was falling away from it. He was afraid that his works also would meet with the same fate. Vasāntrām assured him that it would not be so, and that he would preserve them. Dayāram rejoined, "How long would you live? No one can say what will happen after you are no more." Looking to the extreme popularity even now enjoyed by him, it can't be said that his fears have been realised.

The fact that he could accompany himself on the Tamburâ and other (Indian) musical instruments and sing, added to the attractions with which he was endowed by nature must indeed have made his personality remarkable. There is one likeness of him said to have been left with Ratanbâi, which she refused to part with, as she said, she daily worshipped it before taking her meals. The other likeness, from which copies are procurable is said to be a copy of the original. It was in possession of Raṇḇhod, his last and favourite disciple.

His works are numerous, and the unprecedented popularity that he enjoys to-day is really based on a very minor portion of those works. His garbis which describe the revels of Krishṇa with the "sylvan girls"—gopis—of Gokul Vrindâvan, are, after all, a drop in the ocean of his whole output, and he has to be judged on the point of study, scholarship, powers of exposition, and his faith, by other poems, and not solely by these erotic and emotional ditties. In Gujarati, his works come to forty-eight, in Vraj to forty-one, besides seven thousand miscellaneous Padas in Gujarati, twelve thousand in Vraj, two hundred in Marathi and forty in Punjabi, fifteen in Sanskrit and seventy-five in Urdu. Very few of these are obtainable.

Some put down the total number of his works at one hundred and thirty-five, and some at two hundred and eight and the number of miscellaneous verses and *impromptu* songs. at one lac and a quarter. Many of these

have not been committed to writing, as he was in the habit of composing and reciting *impromptu*, and if no one was near to write them down, they were lost. The women of Dabhoi and Chândod even now sing some songs of his composing which have never yet been collected.*

* The following are his Gujarati works:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ૧ ગીતા માહાત્મ્ય. | ૨૬ અન્યાયમર્દન. |
| ૨ રસિક વલ્લભ. | ૨૭ મોહમર્દન. |
| ૩ અજામિલાસ્થાન. | ૨૮ ફેશ્વર નિરીક્ષણ. |
| ૪ વક્ત્રાસુરાસ્થાન. | ૨૯ પુષ્ટિપંથ રહસ્ય મળીદાય. |
| ૫ પ્રેમરસ ગીતા. | ૩૦ ચિન્તાચૂર્ણિકા. |
| ૬ પ્રબોધ બાબની. | ૩૧ પ્રમેય પંચાવ તથા સ્વાંતકરણ સમાધાન. |
| ૭ કાલ્કજ્ઞાનસાર. | ૩૨ શ્રીકૃષ્ણનામાનૃતધારા. |
| ૮ પ્રશ્નોત્તરમાલિકા. | ૩૩ ક્ષમાપરાધષોડશી. |
| ૯ શ્રીકૃષ્ણનામ માહાત્મ્ય મંજરી. | ૩૪ ષડ્ગતિ વર્ણન. |
| ૧૦ શ્રીકૃષ્ણનામ માહાત્મ્ય માધુરી. | ૩૫ બારમાસ. |
| ૧૧ શ્રીકૃષ્ણસ્તવન ચન્દ્રિકા. | ૩૬ ભક્તબેલ. |
| ૧૨ શ્રીહરિભક્ત ચન્દ્રિકા. | ૩૭ ચોરાસી વૈષ્ણવનું ધોલ. |
| ૧૩ શ્રીહરિભક્ત રત્નમાળા. | ૩૮ બ્રાહ્મણભક્ત વિવાદ નાટક. |
| ૧૪ શ્રીહરિનામ વેલી. | ૩૯ બાળાધરી અન્તરનિષ્ઠ સંવાદ નાટક. |
| ૧૫ શ્રીપુરુષદેવ ચન્દ્રિકા. | ૪૦ મનમતિ સંવાદ. |
| ૧૬ પ્રેમપ્રશંસા. | ૪૧ શ્રીપુરુષોત્તમ પંચાંગ. |
| ૧૭ શિક્ષા તથા પરીક્ષા. | ૪૨ શ્રીયમુના સ્તવન. |
| ૧૮ ભક્તિપોષણ. | ૪૩ શ્રીકૃષ્ણ અષ્ટોતર શતનામ ચિન્તામણિ. |
| ૧૯ ભક્તિદૃઢત્વ. | ૪૪ શ્રીકૃષ્ણનામાવલી. |
| ૨૦ સ્તવનમાધુરી. | ૪૫ વિનય ચત્રિસી. |
| ૨૧ સત્યભામા વિવાહ. | ૪૬ અષ્ટપટરાણી વિવાહ. |
| ૨૨ રુક્મિણી વિવાહ. | ૪૭ ઓસા હરણ. |
| ૨૩ દશમલિલા. | ૪૮ નરસિંહ મહેતાની હુંડી. |
| ૨૪ રાસ પંચાધ્યાયી. | |
| ૨૫ આન્તિ મંજન. | |

Out of the very large number of his Hindi compositions, the **सतसैया** (*Śat Śayyā*) stamps him as a profound Sanskrit scholar and shows he was well versed in the philosophy of the Vallabhi sect. He has given such a masterly exposition of the Śuddhādwaita school of metaphysics in that work, that it simply exacts admiration for the study of a scholar, self made in every sense of the word. The commentaries on the poem are written by him—in Gujarati—and they but serve to confirm the favourable opinion already formed of his abilities.

Many of his poems are very short, and some consist of a few lines only. He has “sown from the sack and not from the hand,” but the sack was not very large. There are others, *Sāmal* for instance and *Premānand*, whose collected works would form as large a library as *Dayārām*’s. But we are more concerned with the quality of the outturn than its quantity.

His work is naturally divided into three parts: 1. Religious or religio-philosophical, 2. Ethical or moral and 3. Erotic or Śringāric. The first takes up by far the largest space in his publications, and the curious reader is referred to his own works, such as the *Rasik Vallabh** and the *Śat*

The plays written by *Dayārām* are mere dialogues, miscalled plays (नाटक). So says the late *Harilal H. Dhruva* in his *Essay on भरतनाट्य शास्त्र*.

* *Mr. Tripathi* considers it to be a key to his works and beliefs.

Śaṅkara to completely follow the trend of his beliefs and tenets. The most prominent feature of his faith, religion or philosophy is Hari Bhakti, devotion to or worship of Hari, which is subordinated to every other consideration.

Like the poets of Sufism—Hafiz and Mowlânâ Rumi,—he too preaches the cult of love.* If anywhere absence of selfishness were to be found in the world it would be in the pure love of a lover for his beloved, in the pursuit of which he braves all dangers and ignores all difficulties. The poet says, make Hari your beloved, place yourself in the position of his lover. Live for Hari, do everything for Hari. Efface yourself for or in Hari. The world is deceitful (full of Mâyâ), do not pursue its pleasures, but wean yourself away from their temporary bliss and momentary gratification, and devote yourself to Hari. The orthodox form of this Bhakti is ninefold,† and the poet has enlarged on all the nine stages. Excepting Mr. Tripathi's book called *दयारामनो अङ्गदेह*, there is no other work in Gujarati expounding Dayâ-râm's philosophy, to which those who are interested in the Śuddhâdwita tenets of Vallabh may turn with great advantage.

* The present writer has in a small pamphlet called *दयाराम અને હાફેઝ* shown the points of similarity in the cult and poetry of both these poets.

† શ્રવણ, કીર્તન, સ્મરણ, પાદસેવન, અર્ચન, વંદન, દાસત્વ, સહ્ય, આત્મ નિવેદન. Some add a tenth, the crown of all the stages, called *પરાભક્તિ* or *પ્રેમભક્તિ*.

His poems on morals or ethics, pure and simple, for it must be noted that Dayárám was capable of completely forgetting his amatory self and write on morals, Vairâgya and Jnân, preponderate in number over his love lyrics. Their great charm lies in the felicity of the language in which they are couched. In spite of their subject matter, a complete antithesis of love, Dayárám did not find it at all difficult to clothe them in as clear and happy a language as his love-songs. The play of words, the interplay of ideas, the execution in short of the whole branch of his work on Niti (morals) and Bhakti is as brilliant as that of the other branch which has made him so popular and so famous.*

* One test of popularity, viz., the Padas (songs) being chanted by wandering minstrels, itinerant bards and beggars on the road side, is more than fulfilled by these songs of Dayárám, and the following may be mentioned as some of them.

- (a) वैष्णव नથી થયો તું રે, શીદ ગુમાનમાં ધૂમે,
હરિજન નથી થયો તું રે.
- (b) ફૂલ્યો શું ફરે છે રે, મૂલ્યો ભવકૂપમાં પચ્યો,
મનુષ્ય દેહ મોંઘી રે, સ્ત્રીયો મણિ હાથે ચઢ્યો,
- (c) ગર્ભવાસ રાખ્યો રે, કિરપા તને બહુ કરી,
સદા સુખ આપ્યું રે, તેને કેમ ગયો વિસરી.
- (d) સાચું તે સગપણ રે, સમજ મન ર્યામ તણું,
બાકી સહુ જૂઠું રે, કશું નહિ કામ તણું.
- (e) શ્રીવલ્લભ વિદ્વલ શ્રી જી, સ્વામી, સામઝીઆ વહાલા,
સઘલું સમજો છો, અન્તરજામી, નંદલાલા રે.

The third part is that which has immortalised him.

3. Erotic, It consists of a large number of garbis (lyrics). They fulfil both the requirements of a lyric, in as much as "each poem turns on some single thought, feeling and situation," and can be, rather, is meant to be, sung to a musical accompaniment.

(f) ब्रज बहालुं रे, वैकुण्ठ नहि आहुं,

मने न गमे चतुर्भुज थाहुं,

त्यां नंदकुंवर क्यांथी लाहुं, ब्रज बहालुं रे.

(g) जे कोई जन कस्याण चाहो ते स्त्रीनी संगत तजजो रे.

(h) जे कोई प्रेम अंश अवतरे, प्रेम रस तेना उरमां ठरे,

सिंहणकरं दुध होय ते, सिंहणसुतने जरे;

कनकपात्र पाखे सौ धातु, फोडीने नीसरे—प्रेमरस०

सकरखोरनुं साकर जीवन, खरना प्राणज हरे.

क्षारसिंधुनुं माछलुं ज्यम, मीठा जळमां मरे—प्रेमरस०

सोमवेली रस पान शुद्ध, जे ब्राह्मण होय ते करे;

बगळ वंशीने वमन करावे, वेदवाणी उचरे—प्रेमरस०

उत्तम वस्तु अधिकार विना मळे, तदपि अर्थ नव सरे;

मत्स्यभोगी बगलो मुक्ताफळ, देखी चंचु ना भरे—प्रेमरस०

(h) He alone who is born with the love-element in him, will be able to assimilate love. It is only a lion-cub that can digest the milk of a lioness; her milk will tear off and destroy every other metal cup excepting that of gold. Sugar will keep alive the sugar-eating bird, but if you give it to a donkey, it will kill him. A salt-water fish if kept in fresh water will die. It is only a Brahmin who can drink (with impunity) the Soma juice, a bastard will vomit it out: so say the Vedas. If you get a good thing without being fit for it, it will not serve your purpose. A fish-eating crane, even if it sees pearls will not eat them.

He sings of carnal love with an enthusiasm and power that is wonderful. These lyrics are said by his admirers to have a religious meaning. They say that the object of his yearning is not the woman addressed, but the deity, that the only way he could express his intense devotion and his ecstatic bliss was in terms of human, sensual love, that Persian poets have sung of the deity and divine worship under the guise of singing the joys of wine and women. This is how they are being explained away. The French poet Paul Verlaine wrote lines of ardent devotion and submission to God, at other times he wrote grossly erotic verses. Algernon Swinburne wrote in the same way too. Now no one would credit Verlaine and Swinburne with expressing their devotion to God when they composed their lyrics. It is a moot point also whether Hafiz can be interpreted as singing of divine things when he wrote burning words about his *Sâki* (cupbearer) and *Mâshuk* (beloved)—and many will take leave to doubt that the women of Dayârâm's lyrics symbolized the deity.

Some of his poems are erotic pure and simple. The sentiment is so obviously that of a cunning and clever voluptuary, if not a debauchee, that no amount of argument can convince the reader, that the words are to be taken in an allegorical sense.* One Gujarati critic writes. "His

some incapable of such an explanation.

* For instance the following verses

poems on Krishna and the maids of Gokul are a stream of burning lava, of realistic passion and love, and if lewdness of writings do not take away from the merits of a poet

His work criticised
favorably.

he is a very great poet indeed. He has a weird and fascinating way of bodying forth a host of overfondled spirits of uncontrollable will, in a language which is not only at once popular and poetical, but drags society after him to adopt the language he creates for them anew. He introduces the men and women of his country to a luxuriance of metres, whose wild music makes them bear with the flame of his sentiments, and there is a subtle *naivete* in everything that comes out from him." (G. M. Tripathi).

Samples of verses con-
taining undisguised
Śringār.

Samples of the garbist given below, would shew the undisguised Śringār of Dayārām.

गोळ पोताने खूणे खाईये, करीए दीठो अदीठोजी;
प्रगट करी बजारे बेठां शुं, लागे छे अति मीठो ?

Enjoy your sweets on the sly-secretly. They do not add to their sweetness by being eaten in the public.

† (५) आवोनी मारे घेर माणवा होजी, राज, आवोनी-मारे घेर माणवा०
प्रेमरस प्यालो पीवा ने पावा, जोबन तुरीने पलाणवा, होजी राज०
पडती राते पधारजो प्रीतम, कोई नथी बेडुं जाणवा. होजी राज०

This garbi is found in the works of Devānand also.

"Come to my house, O prince, to enjoy yourself, come to my house, Come there to drink and make (me) drink the cup of love and to ride the steed of youth. Come at nightfall and no one would care to know about it."

Dayâram's strength is his language. It is simple, chaste, classical and expressive. His songs are superior to those of others, both on account of their language and their rhythm. To appreciate their lilt, they must be heard, when

(b) कई संगे लपटाणा, वालमजी, कई संगे लपटाणा ?

“With which lady have you entangled (enjoyed) yourself, my love with which?

(c) वळतां वहालमां रे, नचाव्यां, ललचाव्यां लोचन,

* * * * *

रमीशुं रातडी रे, आवजो अलबेलाजी घेर,

कहेजो मातने रे, गाय एक खोवाणी छे आज,

जाउं छु शोधवा रे, बांधजो पाणी पहेली पाज,

सासरीजां थकी रे, मारो आवास छे एकान्त,

* * * * *

राखीश दीवडो रे, माणीशुं मनमानी मोज.

* * * * *

While going away he darted his amorous glances at me
Do come to my house, my love, we will enjoy ourselves at night. Tell your mother that a cow is missing and you will have to go in search of her, thus keep an excuse ready for your absence from home. My own apartments are away from those of my husband's relatives.

I will keep a light burning (to guide you) and we will enjoy ourselves to our heart's content.

(d) काचनां फानसमां, दीपक जेवो चळके रे,
सुन्दरीनां वेणमां (? नेणमां) तेवो रतिरस झळके रे.

Just as a light shines brilliant in a glass lantern, so does the light of love flash out from the words (speech? eyes) of a woman.

ladies well-known in this line lead the garba-circles of Surat or Baroda. The audience and the singers are simply carried beyond themselves, and by the enthusiasm engendered by the rhythmical clap of hands and measured voices of the

(e) By way of variety a song which Krishna addresses to a gopi is given.

तमारो तमारो, प्यारी मन माने ते कहोनी;
 नथी चूक्यो पण चूक्यो छुं, मुने दंड गमे ते दोनी;
 गुनेहगार जाणी मुजने, बे भुज पाशे बांधो रे;
 तेथी अधिक करो तो मुजपर, नेनबाण बे साधो रे;
 नाशी जइश जाणो तो मुजने, उर किल्ले चढावो रे;
 कहो तो धीज पतीज करं, शीव पिंडी हाथ धरावो रे;
 * * * * *
 हेत धरी हेडासुं, लीधा, मंदिरमां पधराव्या रे;
 प्रेमसहित पर्यंके पोढ्यां, उमग्यो रतिस भारी रे;
 ए जुगल रूप तणी लीलापर, जाय दयो बलिहारी रे.

I am yours, I am yours, my beloved, you may give me any names you like. I have not erred, but still I say I have erred, punish me as you like. Consider me to be an offender, and bind me with the rope of (your) two hands, if you want to punish me still more aim the two arrows of your eyes at me. If you are afraid of my flying away, hoist me up on the castle of your bosom. I will assure you of my sincerity in any way you like. I will, if you wish, take ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~arrow~~ ^{arrow} by placing my hand on the image (लिङ्ग) of Śiva (She was so pleased that) out of sheer affection she took him to her bosom and carried him home. They slept on the bed with great affection and enjoyed the happiness of love with delight. Dayo is prepared to sacrifice himself for the revels of this pair.

(f) The following dialogue between a gopi and Krishna shows the ingenuity of the latter.

leader and the led, one, for the moment, forgets the objectionable feature of the songs, which does not lie deep.

Dayāram's works have been reviewed and criticised often and by many. The soberest and Navalram's estimate of Dayāram's work the sanest review, however, is that of very sober.

Navalram a wellknown critic and reviewer.

His poetry is greatly subjective, but speaking of passion and love, he thinks his poems are defective in so far as they do not "paint pictures." "One third of them consists of pure emotion, and the rest is superficial embellishment, which to the experienced eye of the real poet appears to be tawdry and useless." "He is inferior to Premānand even in Śringār. . . .—"Where every word of a sentence is in its proper place, where if one word were changed or taken away, the picture drawn

મુજને અડશો માં આઘા રહો, અલબેલા છેલા અડશો માં,
અંક મર્યાના સમ ઝાઓ તો, અધર તળો રસ પાઝં;
કહાન કુંવર કાઢા છો, અડતાં, હું કાઢી થઈ જાઝં—મુજને.
તું મુજ અડતાં શ્યામ થઈશ તો, હું ક્યમ નહિ થાઝં ગોરો,
ફરી મઢતાં રંગ અદલાબદલી, મુજ મોરો તુજ તોરો—મુજને.

Do not touch me, O my dear, do not touch me. I will make you drink the nectar of my lips if you swear not to embrace me, because, O prince Kahān! you are dark, and if you touch me I am afraid I might become dark too. (Krishṇa says) If you think, by my touch you would become dark, why might not it happen that by your touch—embrace—I might become white, and on our embracing each other again you may get back your color and I mine. (He thus calls for two embraces where she objected to one even.)

by it would be spoiled; where even though there be the embellishment of rhyme, it would appear to be so skilfully done as to appear as if it were a part and parcel thereof, where there is no useless amplification, but merely a word to the wise, where there would be conciseness but not such as would make even a learned man desire to add a word to it, where not a rule of prosody would be violated—such poetry, full of meaning and significance does not exist in our language. Only Sanskrit and English contain such poetry.” Judged by this standard, therefore, Dayârâm fails to be considered a master poet in Navalrâm’s eyes, in spite of his immense popularity, the reason of which, he thinks, is the subject matter of his poems, namely, the life and loves of Râdhâ and Krishṇa.

If it were to be believed that Premânand* did write the plays that are attributed to him, then the statement that till the beginning of the nineteenth century Gujarati literature consisted merely of poetry with only a negligible

* Those who contend that the prose dramas which are now ascribed to Premânand were written by him should produce for inspection the ancient manuscripts from which they have been published, so say those who doubt their genuineness. When Dr. Johnson was asked to accept the Ossian translations of Macpherson as translations of very ancient Gaelic original poems, he demanded the production of the original manuscripts by the ancient Gaelic scribes—these not being forthcoming Johnson held Macpherson’s translations to be forgeries, and until the manuscripts of Premânand’s prose dramas are produced—their genuineness will remain open to doubt.

quantity of prose, has to be modified. The prose works of Premânand betray a language so very modern in style, that one would be constrained to say that during the last four hundred years, the language had undergone no change, grammatical, syntactical or idiomatical.* But if side by side with that of Premânand, the prose written by Dayârâm and his followers be considered, it will be found that the latter, even though written later, betrays some characteristics of an antique kind which are wanting in the style of Premânand. So the problem arises, how can prose written later in point of time, betray such characteristics, which in their very nature could not be absent from the prose of an earlier period. The following sentences are taken from a small fragmentary writing of a disciple of Dayârâm.

જાત્રાજીઓનો મોટો સંગ હતો, તેમાં અનેક જી પુરુષોનાં જુદ ને જુદ

* This cannot be said to be a correct conclusion. The following extract taken from a copy of the Panchatantra, made during the time of Sâmal and Premânand, would enable the reader to gauge the difference between the prose of the plays and the prose prevalent then. I am indebted for the extract to Mr. Ranjitrâm Vavabhai, who has given it in his introduction to Gujarati prose in a book called the સાહિત્યરત્ન.

ત્યાંહાં ગુણનિષ્ઠ્યાં નામૈં રાજા છિ. તેને ૧૦૦ પુત્ર હવા રાજપુત્રને ભણાવિવાનું ઉપાય ઘણું કરી પળ જે ભણાવે તેહને મારીને સઘલા ઘરિ આબ્યા ॥ પછી રાજા ચ્યં-તાતુર થયો. તારી પ્રધાનિ પૂછું સ્વામી તુને સી ચંતા છે ॥ વલતુ રાજાઈ કહુ ॥ પ્રધાન મુનેહું મોટી ચંતા છે ॥ વલતુ રાજાઈ કહુ ॥ જે સઘલાજ મૂર્ષ પૂત્ર ॥

જેહના પૂત્ર મૂર્ષ હોઈ ॥ તે પુરુષ વાંશિય વારુ ॥ પળ મૂર્ષ પુત્રથી તો એકું અર્થ ના સરઈ ॥

આવતા હતા, તેઓ પુરણ પુરુષોત્તમરૂપ ધારીને આ શાલંકોને પ્રણામ કરવાને પટલે પગે લાગવાને અતી હતી અને પુગની જે જાવાઈ તે ધરાવતી.

પણ જાવ જે એકજ પદાર્થ પર ઘટિહું રહે તે એક જે મોઢું છે તે દ્વયમ કહેતાં બે સ્થળે મમદું રહે છે તેનો ઓદાર થતો નથી.

તે વાતો તુષાર જે હીમ તેની પેટે ઠંડા થઈ જાય છે, ને શિષ્યને તપાવે કહેતાં શાલે છે.....

Another instance is taken from Dayâram's own writing, his prose commentary to his Śat Śaṃyâ.

એક દુર્ઘાનામાં ગોપી જન છે, તે પોતાની સહી પ્રત્યે પોતાના ગ્રેહે તાપડું દુઃખ કહે છે કે અહીં ! મારા વિરહની વ્યથા જે પીઠા તે જેને હું કહું છું, તે સાંમઠતાં તેહું શરીર તપી જાય છે, તારે મારા હૃદેના તાપડું શું કહેવું ? પણ અહો કહેતાં એક મોઢું આશ્ચર્ય છે, જે તે હૃદયમાં મનમોહન જે નંદલાલ તે વસે છે તો એ પણ સીરે કહેતાં ટાટે રહ્યા, પટલે શો ભાવ કે જો તપતા હોય તો ઢાવીને દર્શન કેમ ન આવે ?

The peculiar characteristic of this style is that the writer always tries to explain one word by its synonym, or a phrase by its equivalent, somewhat like this in English: he felt cold, that is, he felt the absence of heat, he went home, i. e., to his native place. This feature is still found in the speech of those Purâṇis who even now read out and explain such sacred works as the Bhâgavat and the Purâṇas. It is a remnant in them of this old style, and their Kathâ is one running speech most thickly interspersed with double phrases like those underlined above. In Premânand's prose this feature is absent. Could it have come into vogue between his and Dayâram's days ?

CHAPTER VIII

THE INDIGENOUS LITERATURE OF KATHIAWAD.*

There is an indigenous ballad literature peculiar to Kathiawad: peculiar in two respects: Peculiar ballad literature of Kathiawad. firstly, language, and secondly, the glimpses it gives of the social life of the people of the province, wild, romantic and chivalrous. It has been preserved up till now, like the texts of the Vedas in early days, not as a written record, but by oral tradition.† No sustained action has hitherto been taken to collect and publish the many poems and verses, which illustrate the conditions obtaining in old Kathiawad, rich in colour, full of martial prowess, and quivering with emotion. Out of many incidents a few of the most celebrated, will be referred to here. The ballads are written in a style called *दुहा* or couplets, and it is these *दुहा* which are recited by the simple folk of Kathiawad, its peasants and its shepherds while at work or away from it, with considerable feeling, particularly as they commemorate events which have shed an abiding lustre on the lives of their countrymen and women. It has not been possible to discover the author

* This Chapter originally appeared in *East and West* of July, 1913. With the kind permission of the Editor it is reprinted here after being revised.

† "A more important side of Gujarati Literature is the corpus of bardic histories none of which have, so far as I am aware, been published." Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India*, Part I, p. 333.

of these ballads, nor indeed is it known whether the ballads were the work of many or of one. Only one thing is certain, *viz.*, that these ballads are old and very popular.

The दुहा of Halâman Jethwâ, the spirited recitation of which maintains many Bhâts or bards even to-day, are an instance in point. They describe the difficulties of young lovers, whose efforts towards being united in marriage were thwarted by a near relative. Sona Râni was the daughter of Rânâ Rajsinh of Balambha. She had made up her mind to marry only such a person as would be able to answer her riddle:

घणवण घडयां, एरणे अळ्यां [एरण आभळ्यो] न्हिं,*

What is that which has been made without hammer or anvil? The family priest was sent to various courts to see if he could get any one to solve it. After many failures, he at last tried Ghumli, at the foot of the Bardâ mountains. The local chief, a scion of the famous Jethwâ clan of Râjputs, Rânâ Shiyâji tried his hand at the solution but failed. But his young nephew Halâman, could at once read it:

सरवर सात (स्वात) तणां मळे तो मोती नीपजे.†

* There is a supplementary line added,

गोत्यां नव जळ्यां, मळे तो मोकलजो.

† Some substitute the following reply;

माता मेरामण वसे पिता वसे आकाश,

जोडये तो जूनां मोकळें, नवां तो आसो मास.

The mother lives in the ocean, and the father in the clouds. If you want them, I would send you old ones now, the new ones would come in *Âso*.

Pearls are produced if rain drops fall into the mouths of oysters during the Swāti Nakshatra (fifteenth mansion of the Hindu Zodiac). His solution was "Pearls," which are fashioned without being hammered or placed on an anvil.* In ordinary course the priest would have gone and reported the matter faithfully to princess Sona and her union with Halâmaṇ would have been the result, but seeing a beautiful prize about to be snatched away from his hands Râṇâ Shiyâji bribed the Brahmin to substitute his name instead of Halâmaṇ's as the reader of the riddle, and accordingly it was arranged that the bride should go, with a proper equipage in charge of the priest to Ghumli, and be married to the Râṇâ. Till the bride's party came to the place, Halâmaṇ was under the impression that he was the chosen bridegroom, but his eyes were opened by a trusted follower of his, who told him that his uncle had decided to marry the princess. He felt sorely disappointed, but yielding to an impulse of respect for his elders, he said he would not interfere. On the other hand, it so happened, that a squabble took place between the maidservants of Sona Kunvari, and ^{those of} Râṇâ Shiyâji, at a well while drawing water, and they began to taunt and abuse each other.

The Râṇâ's maid said:

बांधी मूठी लाख लिये, उचाहि वा खाय,
हलामण दुहा पारखे, सोन शियावे जाय.*

* Another reading is,

बांधी मूठी लाख, उचाही वा खाय,
हलामण दुहो पालटे, सोन शिया घेर जाय.

Who knows what is in a shut hand ? When opened it may be empty. Halâmaṇ reads the riddle, but Shiyâ gets Sona for his bride.

This startled the poor maid so much that she at once ran to her mistress, and told her what had happened. She called the priest, whom she suspected of foul play, and under threat of punishment made him confess his guilt. She now knew what had taken place, and made up her mind to thwart the Râṇâ's designs. Accordingly when he sent her presents of ornaments and dresses, she threw them away and sent word with the servants—

छुड़ि भयों क्षणगार, मने शियानो शोभे नहीं
हलामण भर्षार, शियो अमारो सासरो—

that it did not behove her to accept the basketful of presents from Shiyâji, as he was her father-in-law, while Halâmaṇ was her husband.

When his servants reported this incident to him Shiyâji lost his temper at the insult. He thought that there must be the hand of Halâmaṇ in it. He sent for Halâmaṇ and ordered him to quit his dominions forthwith. Halâmaṇ obeyed, but while leaving he met a servant-girl of Sona, by whom he sent a message :

देखवटो दरार, साचो दीचो, शिये जेठवे,
हवे अह भणजे जुहार, हांचे गयो हलामणो:

Shiyâ Jethwâ has sent me away, I am going to Hâmbâ in Sind. Tell your mistress this and present her with my respects.

On hearing this, Sona exclaimed :

उत्तारो भंगार, मने जातां लागे जेठवो,
मारी उरमां मार, क्यां हाल्यो गयो हलामणो ?

I feel this house burning me like fire, now that Halâman Jethwâ has gone. O Halâman! having wounded my heart, where have you gone ?

The painful incident rendered her faint, and it was with difficulty that her maids were able to bring back consciousness to her, when the Râñâ called on her to learn his fate. She shut herself up in a room and refused to see him, saying he should not have any evil designs on his daughter-in-law. This added to his anger, and he was preparing to ravish her, when a servant brought him news, that the Sindhis had attacked the borders of his territory, and his immediate presence there was necessary to beat them back. This unexpected contingency upset his plans, and he had to leave at once, after giving orders that Sona should on no account be allowed to move out. However, after his departure Sona did go out of the town, saying she wanted to visit a temple. At some distance from the town, she and her maid managed to get rid of the driver and the maid taking his place drove away towards Hâmbâ.

Meanwhile Halâman was living at Hâmbâ with his aunt, but his life was not happy. Like a distracted lover, he was wandering in the jungle from place to place, and like King Pururavâ in the famous drama of Kalidas,

questioning every tree and bird if they had seen his beloved. The दुहा that he addressed them are very well known for their pathos:

व्हाला वियोगी वांस, अही की अवगणे आवीओ ?
भणने मारी भोंयना, मने संदेशो कांइ सोननो ? *

Seeing a bamboo tree, he was reminded of his native country, where bamboos grew in abundance. He felt it was an exile like him, but still he thought it might be knowing something about his beloved. He says, "my dear exiled bamboo, what fault has brought you here? O you! who come from my native place, have you a message from Sona for me?"

The bamboo replies:

काप्यो लइ कवाडीये, पछे झीक्यो झखुमांय,
छोटे छेवाणो आज, तेथी छुद न रही सोननी.

"I was cut down with an axe and thrown into the sea. The waves rendered me senseless, so I know nothing of Sona."

He addresses a fisherman, then:

जालीडा नांखने जाल, मीठा भेरामण मझे, *
करम छे कपाल, के बोतेरसें बरहे रखां ?

"O fisherman, throw your net into the sea, and then let me see, if my good fortune has come with me, or been left behind at Bardâ."

His aunt to console him proposed a marriage to a

* There is a variant which reads better, हलामणना नामनी.

Sindhi beauty, but he declined, saying, Sona only will I wed.

In this unhappy state of mind, he sat on a stone in a jungle. A serpent came from under it, and bit his toe. The poison began to do its work, and Halâman thought that his last moments were approaching, and that he would die without seeing his lady-love. So he bewailed his fate thus:

વઠજે સોન સુજાણ, હું સૂતો છેછે સાથરે,
પામી નથી તું પ્રાણ, અવ ઘડી આરામની.
મનહર તારું મુલ્લ, મેં જાણ અજાણે જોયું નહિ,
આજ્ઞા રહી ડરમાંય, એતે પામ્યો આ ગતી.

“Come this way, dear Sona, I am lying on my last bed. O my soul, you have not had even half a moment of solace. I have neither consciously nor unconsciously seen your beautiful face, my hopes have remained in my heart, and at last I find myself in this plight (*i. e.*, am dying).

After leaving the territory of the Râṇâ, Sona and her maid, on their way to Hâmbâ, were passing through the jungle and halted for rest and refreshment. The maid went to find water, and whilst wandering about came to where Halâman was lying unconscious. She recognised him and ran to her mistress with the news. Sona came to the spot, and seeing the unhappy fate of her lover, fainted away. After great exertion the maid brought her back to consciousness. But her lamentations were heartrending:

હાંબાની હૃદ માંય, મેં વહાલી વસ્તુ વિસારીયું,
હેઢાકેરો હાર, જે હતો હલ્મણ જેઠવો,

हांबा हुंगर हेठ, में हकामण हिंचोळयो नहि,
आसायु रही अनेक, मने जेठवो जोबा तणी.

"I have lost a thing dear to me within the limits of Hâmbâ; it is the necklace of my heart, one whose name was Halâman Jethwâ. Alas! I could not rock Halâman (to sleep) at the foot of the Hâmbâ mountains. I had many hopes of meeting Jethwâ, but they all remained unfulfilled."

Taking him to be lifeless, she thought it incumbent on her to cremate the dead body decently, and she asked her maid to gather together fuel, so that she might prepare a pile for that purpose, and also burn herself with the lord of her heart, like a true *Sati*. She says:

हांबानी हइ मांहे आज पीठी भयों पोदाडीओ,
मींदळ छूटयां मसाण, हुं हारी बेठी हकामणो.
हकामणने हिये, खोडच खडकीआं,
हवे करवा स्वर्गे साथ, मारे बळहुं, बरदाना यणी.

"I have laid, within the boundaries of Hâmbâ, one on whom the (yellow) colour of turmeric paste applied at the time of marriage is yet fresh (*i. e.*, one who was soon to marry). The mindhal nuts tied (to our hands) have been untied on the burning ground, (since) I have lost Halâman. On the body of Halâman wood has been piled. I will mount the pyre, and with the lord of Bardâ I shall ascend to heaven."

The wails of Sona and her maid attracted the attention of a serpent charmer, who came upon the scene. He examined the body of Halâman and found that life was

not extinct, and that there was a chance of reviving him. The serpent charmer took out the antidote he had against snake poison and applied it to the wound. Soon Halâman regained his senses, and was both surprised and delighted to see Sona there. The rest of the tale is easily told. They married, and as Shiyâji died shortly after, they went back to their native country, and lived happily.

જેવી સોન સજાળ, તેવો હલામળ હીરલો,
તન બે એકજ પ્રાણ, જુગતે જુગતું જોડણું.

Just as Sona was clever, so was Halâman shining (like a diamond). They had two bodies, but one soul: it was a fit pair in every way.

Another such couple is Ujalibai and Meha Jethwo of the same Bardâ hills. Ujali was Ujali and Meha. the daughter of a Châraṇ, and the natives of Kathiawad revere Châraṇ ladies as they revere a goddess. Reports of Ujali's unparalleled beauty made Meha Jethwâ anxious to see her. When he saw her, they fell in love with each other, and the prince of Ghumli promised to marry her. But the Mahâjan of the place—his own subjects—knew better. To them, the union of a Châraṇi lady—a goddess—with a Rajput appeared to be a gross act of sacrilege, and they were prepared to prevent it at any cost. They therefore waylaid Meha Jethwâ, on his way back from a meeting with Ujali. Meha saw them beating cruelly an old cow, and it struck him as an unusual thing to see Hindus ill-treating a cow. He asked them the reason of it, and they said, that if their king thought there was no

sin in a Rajput marrying a Châraṇi woman, they too thought there was no sin in beating a cow. He realised the enormity of the offence he was on the point of committing, and promised them to abstain from it.

On the day fixed for the wedding, as there was no call from Meha, Ujali became impatient, and went over to Ghumli. She wanted to see Meha, but was not permitted to do so. She sent a message to him, and was told in reply that Meha would not marry her. This broke her heart, and she passed the rest of her life in doing acts of piety and in devotion.

There are many દુહા depicting the various stages of their love and the disenchantment of Ujali. The following are some couplets from the messages sent by her.

હતું અને હારવીડં, મોતી મહા દરિયે,
કાઠ્ઠો પહેરી કાઠ્ઠ, અમને સાયર શોધવો પડયો.
મેહની મેહી હેઠ, ડખી અરદાસાં કરાં,
મોઢું દેલાહને મેહ, જીવતાં રહીએ જોઢવા.

આમપરેથી ડતરી, ચારણ ખૂલ્લી છે,
કયાં જાડં જોઢવા, મોરી મત ડુંઝાણી છે.

ડુંઝવ મેં, હમને ડંઢે જલ ડતારીને,
અમ મરતે ટુંને, જલ નહી આવે જોઢવા.

“I had a pearl, I lost it in the great ocean. I had to put on black garments and search the ocean. I am standing underneath the balcony of Meha, and entreating. O Meha,

show me your face, so that I might live, O Jethwâ. . . . The Châraṇ woman has descended from the sky, and is hungry. Where should I go, O Jethwâ, my senses are confused. . . . O Jethwâ, do not abandon me after taking me into deep waters. If I die, it would not redound to your credit."

To these pathetic entreaties, Meha sent this reply:

चारण एटला देव, जोग माया करी जाणीए,
चारणथी मन मळे, बडे बरडानो धणी.

"To us, all the Châraṇs are gods, and all the Châraṇis goddesses. If he were to love (and wed) Châraṇ (ladies), the ruler of Bardâ would die."

Odho Jam and Hothalde Padamani, Lákho and Fulânde, these two couples have also furnished food for romance.

The courage of Râṇakdevi, the wife of Râkhengâr, the ruler of Junagadh, whom Siddhrâj Jayasinh, of Aṇhilwâd Pâtaṇ had attacked (in the eleventh century A. D.) and defeated, to deprive him of his beautiful consort, has passed into history. Râkhengâr was betrayed and killed through the treachery of his nephew, and Râṇakdevi was forcibly taken away by Siddhrâj. But coming near Wadhwan, she managed to burn herself as a *Sati* with the permission of Siddhrâj.

A number of fine and spirited couplets are attributed to her, in praise of Girnar and in praise of her lord:

- (१) माणेरा म तुं रोय, म कर राती आंखडी,
कूळमां कागे खोय, मरतां मा न संभारीए.
- (२) उत्तर्यां गढ गीरनार, तन आभ्युं तळादीए,
वळतां बीजी वार, दामो कंड नथी देखवो.
- (३) उंचो गढ गीरनार, वादळथी वातुं करे,
मरतां रा खंगार, रंडापो राणक देवडी.
- (४) मार पाटण देस, पाणी विना पूरां मरे,
सरवो सोरठ देस, सावजडा सेंजळ पीए.
- (५) वायु वाय सवाय, वाये वेळु परजळे,
उभो त्यां सिधराज, सत जोवा सोरठियाणीदुं.

(1) Weep not my child, make not your eyelids red, think not of your mother when facing death: disgrace not your ancestors by showing weakness. (2) I descended the hill of Girnar, and my body reached its foot. I will never again see Damodar Kund (the lake at the foot of the hill). (3) The fort of Girnar is so high, that it touches the sky. By the death of Râkhengâr, Rânakdevi becomes a widow. (4) The country round about Pâtaṇ is waterless, its people die of thirst but prosperous is the land of Sorath, where even tigers drink their fill. (5) The winds are hurricānes, they are so hot that they burn even sand. There Siddhraj was standing to watch the miraculous power of the lady from Sorath.

Râ Mandalik, another ruler belonging to the same family as Râkhengâr's—the same who put Narsinh Mehta's faith to test—forgetting his duty (धर्म) as a king, to pro-

Râ Mandalik's unhappy fate.

tect his subjects like his children tried to lay violent hands on a Châraṇ lady, Nāgbâi. Nāgbâi cursed him in very bitter terms, prophesying that he would lose his kingdom, and Mahomedans would rule where Hindus exercised authority so long. The prophecy came true, as in A. D. 1473 Mahmud Begadâ invaded Junagadh and Râ Mandalik had to embrace Islam.

મઠ ગરવાનાં રાજ, સંતાપી ચારણ પામીશ નહિ,
કાયા થાશે કોઢળી, મું સંભારીશ મંડલીક.

દરવાજે દરવાણ, રાહના રહેશે નહિ,
ભમતો માગીશ ખીલ, મું સંભારીશ મંડલીકઃ
જ્ઞાલરના જ્ઞાણકાર, શંભ સંભળાશે નહિ,
મુલ્લાં પદશે નમાજ, મું સંભારીશ મંડલીક.

પોથીં ને પુરાણ ભાગવતે બઢ્યો નહિ,
કલમો પદશે કુરાન, તે દી મું સંભારીશ મંડલીક.

“If you make a Châraṇ maid unhappy, you will not be able to rule the mighty fort (of Girnar). Your body will be attacked with leprosy, then you will remember me and my curse. . . . At the gates, there will be no gate-keepers of the Râ, and you will have to wander about as a beggar, you will then remember me and my curse. You will hear no more the ringing of the gong, nor the sounding of the conch. Mullas would say their prayers there (in the temples), and then you would remember me and my curse. You will no more be able to read religious works, the Purâṇas and the Bhâgavat, but the Kalamâ of the Koran

would be read (in your territory), and on that day you will remember me and my curse.”

These burnings words, uttered from the bottom of her heart by a woman, whose modesty was outraged by one, who stood to her in the capacity of a father, are often quoted as a warning to unscrupulous rulers. The decline of Hindu sway in Junagadh is said to be the direct result of Râ Mandalik's improper conduct.

The adventures of many local heroes like Ebhal Vâlo, Jetho Vâlo, Ugo Vâlo and Khetâ Makvân, have been perpetuated in fragmentary verses. The higher and more well known clans of Rajputs, the Zâlâs and the Parmârs, have also inspired poets by their courage and chivalry.

There is quite a store-house of didactic and ethical verses in the literature composed by saintly peasants, who are known by the appellation of Bhagats. The following specimens are chosen at random from a miscellaneous collection:

आशा उंडी खाह, पहाड्यी पूराय नहि,
हेम मेरुसम होय तोये मन माने नहि.

“Hope is like a deep ravine, which can not be filled up even with a mountain. No one is satisfied even if he possesses (a pile of) gold, as high as Mount Meru.”

देशमां ठंढेरो फेरवो, प्रीत म करसो कोय,
करो तो काळज आपजो, (नकां) नित वरसोळा होय.

“Have it proclaimed throughout your country, that no one should fall in love; but if one does so, he must give up his heart or otherwise there would be unhappiness every day.”

धूता होय सलझणा, वेद्या होय सलज,

खारां पाणी निर्मळां, ए त्रण चीज अकज.

“It is impossible to expect cheats to be virtuous, prostitutes to be modest, and salt water to be clear.”

In many poems we find references to the natural scenery of Kathiawad, and to the life led by its humble inhabitants—the Rabâris and the Châraṇs—the shepherds, goatherds and cowherds—very pointedly made.

The भडळीवाक्य—the utterances of Bhadali*—is a string of aphorisms, prognosticating (specially) the state of (wet) weather, based on certain phenomena in nature. It is the Bible of the agriculturist. If a certain state of weather prevails on a certain day or in a certain month, the condition of the coming monsoon is prophesied to be hopeful or disappointing: this is what is found in the collection. The statements are as concise and definite as the *Sutras* of the Dharm Śāstras. An exact counterpart to them is found also in the very early literature of Bengal, where the collection is called—बारमासी.

Utterances of Bhadali
prognosticating
weather

१. आवण पहेलां पांचदीन, मेह न मांहे आळ,
विशु पधारो माळवे, हमे जंझु मोसाळ.

* The only daughter of Hudad, a well-known astrologer of Marwad. He had no son, and so he taught his science to his daughter.

२. पूरव ताणे काचवी जो आयमते सर
भडली वायक एम भणे दुबे जमाई कूर.

३. शमी आदीतां मंगळां, जो पोटे जदुराय,
चाक चढावे मेदनी, पृथ्वी परले थाय [करके पाज बंधाय].

1. If rain does not begin to pour down five days before Shrâvan then a wife should say to her husband, you better go to Mâlwa (to earn), and I would go to my father's house, meaning that the monsoon would fail, and they should shut up their house.

2. If at sunset, a rainbow be seen in the east, then Bhadali says, that she would be able to feed people on rice and milk, that is, the monsoon would be prosperous.*

3. If the god Jadurây goes to sleep on a Saturday, Sunday or Tuesday—*i. e.*, if the Âshâdi Ekâdashi (the eleventh day of the first half of the month of Âshâd, on which day the god Jadurây is supposed to go to sleep, and sleep for the next four months), falls on any of these days of the week—the rains would be so abundant, that people would go mad, and the earth would be drowned (and a bridge made of bones.)

Those who have put these prognostications to test,
have found them true, almost invariably.
found to be correct. The weather-wisdom contained in the

* This is like the English proverb:—

A rainbow in the morning
Is a shepherd's warning
A rainbow at night
Is a shepherd's delight.

verses is the result of observation and experience spread over a very long time, and cultivators all over Kathiawad turn to it intuitively, and base their calculations on it. The verses are collected and published, but owing to absence of editing, many of them have become obscure, and cannot be understood, and owing also to variation of readings, it is very difficult at times to determine the correct text or interpretation. It is greatly desirable that some one acquainted both with the science of meteorology and the provincialisms of Kathiawad, should bring out a corrected and annotated edition of the **મહાવાક્ય**. It would be a boon greatly appreciated by the general public.

Those who have heard the shepherds and cowherds of Kathiawad, while grazing their flocks or herds on opposite banks of a stream or river reciting **દુહા**, narrating some incident in the amorous life of Krishna and Rádha—the shepherd on one bank reciting a couplet, and the shepherd on the opposite bank answering back—would never forget the charm of the situation, which is heightened when this feast of song happens to take place in a lonely jungle, with the rain falling in a slight drizzle, and nature wearing a green robe matching the very description of scenes and spots in the lines sung. The illiteracy of the reciters does not prevent them from fully entering into the spirit of the song. This floating literature has not yet been caught by the printer's art, although very valuable from various points of view.

Effect of hearing
recitation of couplets.

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NOTE.

Besides the three poets mentioned in Chapter IV, a poet who wrote with taste and vigor, has recently been unearthed by Mr. Chimanlal D. Dalal, M. A.,* who has very creditably made the subject of Old Gujarati his own. The name of the poet is Gaṇapati, son of Narsâ, a Kâyastha by caste, and an inhabitant of Amod near Broach. He forestalled Sâmal, and wrote a narrative poem, called the Mâdhavânal Kâmakandalâ Dogdhak, consisting of twenty-five hundred Do'âs (couplets) divided into eight parts. It was composed in Samvat year 1574 (A. D. 1518). The story is narrated in a more pleasing way than Sâmal, and throws some light on the manners and customs of the time. Another poet, a Jain Sadhu by name Kuśallâbha Vâchak, who has written many books of poems including Mâru Dholâ Chopâi (Samvat year 1616, A. D. 1560), has tried his hand at the same story, and has called his composition—Mâdhavânal Kâmakandalâ Râs.† Both these works are written in old Gujarati, and they furnish proof of the fact that Sâmal was not a pioneer, in this branch-story-telling-of Gujarati literature, but had more than one predecessor, whose works must have furnished him with materials for his own poems.

* See the monthly periodical, Sâhitya, for August, 1914.

† Rao Bahadur Hargovandas Dwarkâdas Kântavâlâ, who is publishing this Râs in the pages of the Sâhitya (from June 1914), gives Samvat year 1616 and A. D. 1560 as the date of its composition.

ERRATUM.

On Page 22 line 9 read Mugdhâvabodha *Auktika*
for Mugdhâvabodh *Mauktik*.

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